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High anxiety: Proposed U.S. hemp rules worry industry

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)— Hemp growers and entrepreneurs who were joyous a year ago after U.S. lawmakers reclassified the plant as a legal agricultural crop now are worried their businesses could be crippled if federal policymakers move ahead with draft regulations. Licenses for hemp cultivation topped a half-million acres (200,000 hectares) last year, more than 450% above 2018 levels, so there's intense interest in the rules the U.S. government is creating. Critical comments on the draft have poured in from hemp farmers, processors, retailers and state governments. Growers are concerned the government wants to use a heavy hand that could result in many crops failing required tests and being destroyed. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the agency writing the rules, estimates 20% of hemp lots would fail under the proposed regulations.



In this April 23, 2018, file photo, Trevor Eubanks, plant manager for Big Top Farms, shovels dried hemp as branches hang drying in barn rafters overhead at their production facility near Sisters, Ore.

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Associated Press

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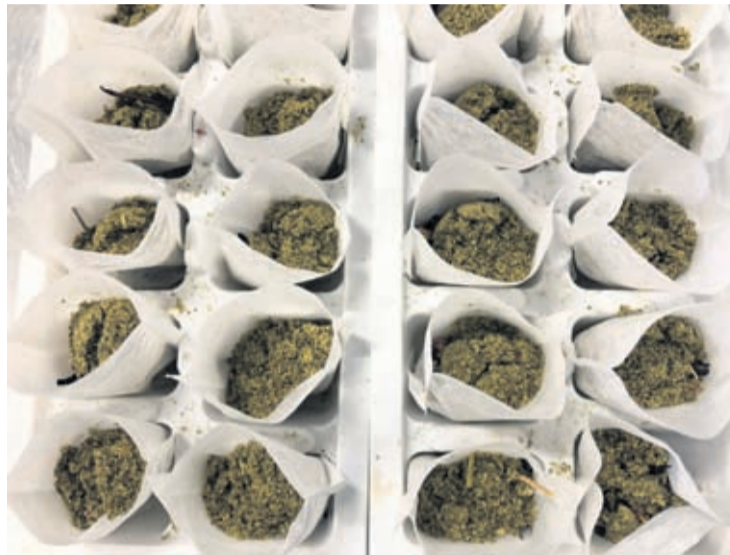
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High anxiety: Proposed U.S. hemp rules worry industry

Continued from Front

"Their business is to support farmers — and not punish farmers — and the rules as they're written right now punish farmers," said Dove Oldham, who last year grew an acre (0.40 hectares) of hemp on her family farm in Grants Pass. "There's just a lot of confusion, and people are just looking for leadership." The USDA did not respond to the criticism but has taken the unusual step of extending the public comment period by a month, until Jan. 29. The agency told The Associated Press it will analyze information from this year's growing season before releasing its final rules, which would take effect in 2021.

Agricultural officials in states that run pilot hemp cultivation programs under an earlier federal provision are weighing in with formal letters to the USDA. "There are 46 states where hemp is legal, and I'm going to say that every single state has raised concerns to us about something within the rule. They might be coming from different perspectives, but every state has raised concerns," said Aline DeLucia, director of public policy for the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. Most of the anxiety involves how the federal government plans to test for THC, the high-inducing compound found in marijuana and hemp, both cannabis



This Dec. 17, 2019, photo shows teabags made using hemp-derived CBD and other botanicals as they await final packaging at a warehouse in Portland, Ore.

Associated Press

plants. The federal government and most states consider plants with tiny amounts—0.3% or less—to be hemp. Anything above that is marijuana and illegal under federal law. Yet another cannabis compound has fueled the explosion in hemp cultivation. Cannabidiol, or CBD, is marketed as a health and wellness aid and infused in everything from food and drinks to lotions, toothpaste and pet treats. Many have credited CBD with helping ease pain, increase sleep and reduce anxiety. But scientists caution not enough is known about its health effects, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration last year targeted nearly two dozen companies for making CBD health claims. Still, the CBD market is increasing at a triple-digit rate and could have \$20 billion in sales by 2024, according to a recent study by BDS Analytics, a marketing analysis firm that tracks cannabis industry trends. About 80% of the 18,000 farmers licensed for hemp cultivation are in the CBD market, said Eric Steenstra, president of the advocacy

group Vote Hemp. The remaining 20% grow hemp for its fiber, used in everything from fabric to construction materials, or its grain, which is added to health foods. But hemp is a notoriously fickle crop. Conditions such as sunlight, moisture and soil composition determine its ratio of THC to CBD. Choosing the right harvesting window is critical to ensuring it stays within acceptable THC levels. Under the draft USDA rules, farmers have no wiggle room. They must harvest within 15 days of testing their crop for THC, and the samples must be sent to a lab certified by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Samples must be from the top of the plant, where THC levels are highest, and the final measurement must include not just THC, but also THCA, a nonpsychoactive component. Crops that test above 0.3% for the two combined must be destroyed. Growers with crops above 0.5% would be considered in "negligent violation," and those with repeated violations could be suspended from farming hemp.

In addition, a pilot program for federal crop insurance that would be available to hemp growers in some states specifies that crops lost because of high THC levels won't be covered. Those provisions are causing alarm among growers and states with pilot hemp programs allowed under the 2014 Farm Bill. Some states allow THC levels above 0.3%, and not all include THCA in that calculation. Many permit more harvesting time for growers after THC testing. Farmers are lobbying for a 1% THC limit and a 30-day harvest window to give them more flexibility while remaining well under THC levels that can get people high. The draft regulations don't "seem to be informed by the reality of the crop," said Jesse Richardson, who with his brother sells CBD-infused teas and capsules under the brand The Brothers Apothecary. "If no one can produce (federally) compliant hemp flower, then there will be no CBD oil on the market." Growers are also worried about the proposed rule requiring that all THC testing be done in a DEA-certified lab because there are so few of them. Some states have only one, which would serve hundreds of growers in a short harvest window. Samantha Ford, a third-generation farmer in North Carolina, waited two weeks to get back THC results from a lab last fall and then spent 45 days harvesting her 1 acre (0.40 hectares) of hemp by hand. "The 15-day window — that's not feasible, and that was on a small scale," she said. "I can't imagine farmers who have acres and acres and acres of it." □

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U.S. drops designation of China as currency manipulator

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration is dropping its designation of China as a currency manipulator in advance of the signing Wednesday of a Phase 1 U.S.-China trade agreement.

The preliminary pact that the two sides are set to sign this week includes a section that's intended to prevent China from manipulating its currency to gain trade advantages. The action announced Monday comes five months after the Trump administration had branded China a currency manipulator — the first time that any country had been so named since 1994 during the Clinton administration. Even while removing China from its currency blacklist, the Treasury Department does name China as one of 10 countries it says require placement on a watch list that will mean their currency practices will be closely monitored. In addition to China, the countries on that list are Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland and Vietnam.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the administration had dropped China's designation as a currency manipulator because of commitments in the Phase 1 trade agreement that President Donald Trump is to sign with China on Wednesday at the White House. "China has made enforceable commitments to refrain from competitive devaluation, while promoting transparency and accountability," Mnuchin said in a statement accompanying the currency report. Some critics of China's

trade practices criticized the administration's decision Monday. "China is a currency manipulator — that is a fact," said Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic leader in the Senate. "When it comes to the president's stance on China, Americans are getting a lot of show and very little results."

The Treasury Department is required to report to Congress twice a year in April and October on whether any countries are manipulating their currencies to gain unfair trade advantages against U.S. businesses and workers. When a country manipulates its currency to keep it artificially low, its goods become comparatively less expensive overseas — and other countries' goods become relatively more expensive. The new report is technically three months late, apparently because the Trump administration had delayed its release until it had achieved the currency Phase 1 commitments from China.

The initial decision to brand China as a manipulator had come in a surprise announcement in August, reversing a Treasury finding in May that no country was manipulating its currency. The United States had not put any country on the manipulation blacklist since the Clinton administration branded China a manipulator 26 years ago. Trump had long accused China of manipulating its currency, even though most independent experts concluded that Beijing had stopped doing so years ago.

The designation was largely symbolic. It obliged the United States to enter into negotiations to resolve



In this April 25, 2018, file photo, attendees visit the Ford booth during Auto China 2018 show held in Beijing, China.
Associated Press

the currency problem that could ultimately lead to the imposition of economic sanctions such as higher tariffs on Chinese goods — something the Trump administration was already doing in its tit-for-tat trade

war with China. Trump is scheduled to sign the Phase 1 agreement on Wednesday after which administration officials said the text of the deal will be made public. In a fact sheet on the deal

released Dec. 13, the administration said the agreement would address "unfair currency practices by requiring high-standard commitments to refrain from competitive devaluations and targeting of exchange rates."

The signing of the Phase 1 agreement caps a rocky two-years of trade conflict between the two nations in which punitive tariffs were imposed on billions of dollars of products from each nation. The battle escalated uncertainty and caused businesses to pull back on their investments, slowing global growth. It also roiled financial markets with fears that the trade war could become serious enough to push the U.S. economy into a recession. □

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Booker ends presidential bid after polling, money struggles

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) —

Democrat Cory Booker dropped out of the presidential race Monday, ending a campaign whose message of unity and love failed to resonate in a political era marked by chaos and anxiety.

His departure now leaves a field that was once the most diverse in history with just one remaining African American candidate, former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick, who is struggling to register in the polls amid a late entry into the race.

Since launching his campaign last February, Booker, a U.S. senator from New Jersey, struggled to raise the type of money required to support a White House bid. He was at the back of the pack in most surveys and failed to meet the polling requirements needed to participate in Tuesday's debate. Booker also missed last month's debate and exits the race polling in low single digits in the early primary states and nationwide.

In an email to supporters, Booker said that he "got into this race to win" and that his failure to make the debates prevented him from raising the money required for victory.

"Our campaign has reached the point where we need more money to scale up and continue building a campaign that can win -- money we don't have, and money that is harder to raise because I won't be on the next debate stage and because the urgent business of impeachment will rightly be keeping me in Washington," he said.

For African Americans, Booker's exit is more mean-



In this Jan. 9, 2020 file photo, Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., speaks with attendees after a campaign event in Mount Vernon, Iowa.

ingful than just being one less option to consider.

"It means that we don't count," said Helen Moore, a member of the Detroit-based Keep the Vote-No Takeover grassroots organization. "Now, we can't look forward to any black candidate being considered from now until it's time to vote. They are completely out of the picture."

Booker had warned that the looming impeachment trial of President Donald Trump would deal a "big, big blow" to his campaign by pulling him away from Iowa in the final weeks before the Feb. 3 Iowa caucuses. He hinted at the challenges facing his campaign last week in an interview on The Associated Press' "Ground Game" podcast.

In his email to supporters, Booker pledged to do "everything in my power to elect the eventual Democratic nominee for president," though his campaign says he has no immediate plans to endorse

a candidate in the primary. It's a humbling finish for someone who was once lauded by Oprah Winfrey as the "rock star mayor" who helped lead the renewal of Newark, New Jersey. During his seven years in City Hall, Booker was known for his headline-grabbing feats of local do-goodery, including running into a burning building to save a woman, and his early fluency with social media, which brought him 1.4 million followers on Twitter when the platform was little used in politics. His rhetorical skills and Ivy League background often brought comparisons to President Barack Obama, and he'd been discussed as a potential presidential contender since his arrival in the Senate in 2013.

Now, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren has mastered the art of the selfie on social media. Another former mayor, Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, is seen as the freshest face in the field. Former Vice Presi-

dent Joe Biden has built a strong base of support with black voters. And Booker's message of hope and love seemed to fall flat during an era characterized perhaps most strongly by Democratic fury over the actions of the Trump administration.

An early focus on building out a strong and seasoned campaign operation in Iowa and South Carolina may have hampered his campaign in the long run, as the resources he spent early on staff there left him working with a tight budget in the later stages of the primary, when many of his opponents were going on air with television ads. That meant that even later in the campaign, after he had collected some of the top endorsements in Iowa and visited South Carolina almost more than any other candidate, a significant portion of the electorate in both states either said they were unfamiliar with his campaign or viewed him unfavorably.

On the stump, Booker emphasized his Midwestern connections — often referencing the nearly 80 family members he has still living in Iowa when he campaigned there — and delivered an exhortation to voters to use "radical love" to overcome what he considered Trump's hate. But he rarely drew a contrast with his opponents on the trail, even when asked directly, and even some of Booker's supporters worried his message on Trump wasn't sharp enough to go up against a Republican president known for dragging his opponents into the mud.

Booker struggled to land on a message that would resonate with voters. He's long been seen as a progressive Democrat in the Senate, pushing for criminal justice reform and marijuana legalization. And on the campaign trail, he proposed establishing a \$1,000 savings account for every child born in the U.S. to help close the racial wealth gap.

He was among the first candidates to release a gun control plan, and at the time it was the most ambitious in the field, as it included a gun licensing program that would have been seen as political suicide just a decade before. He also released an early criminal justice reform plan that focused heavily on addressing sentencing disparities for drug crimes.

But he also sought to frame himself as an uplifting, unifying figure who emphasized his bipartisan work record. That didn't land in a Democratic primary that has often rewarded candidates who promised voters they were tough-minded fighters who could take on Trump. □

Vote on NJ bill to bar certain vaccine exemptions stalled

By MIKE CATALINI

Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — New Jersey lawmakers postponed an expected vote on a bill to eliminate most religious exemptions for vaccines for schoolchildren saying they lacked the votes, and leading to raucous cheers from opponents who had encircled the Statehouse with flags, bullhorns and banners.

Democratic Senate President Steve Sweeney and Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg said late Monday that there was a lot of "misinformation" getting around, leading to lawmakers withholding support for the measure that had already passed in the Assembly.

For the third time in a month, the opponents homed in on the capitol complex and lobbed argument after argument at state lawmakers, including that their religious freedom was being violated by the measure. When it became clear that the bill would not get a vote, they cheered and applauded so loudly that it could be heard inside the Senate chamber. "They can stand outside and ring sirens and beat pots and believe what they want to believe but our responsibility is to protect the larger residents of the state of New Jersey, and that's what we're going to do," Weinberg said.

Monday was the final meeting of the Legislature's current session, with a new one beginning Tuesday. That means any bill would have to be reintroduced and wind its way through the process yet again.

Sweeney promised to do that. He also said he would bring in medical doctors and other experts to respond to all the opponents' concerns.

The legislation as initially written would have ended a religious exemption to vaccine requirements for children attending any school in the state, but lawmakers amended the bill last week to allow exemptions for pupils at private schools and for siblings of



People hold signs during a protest at the state house in Trenton, N.J., Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

children who had vaccine-related injuries.

Despite the last-minute changes, opponents crowded the Statehouse, even arranging for portable toilets to be brought in. They circled the building, and their chanting was so loud that it made the proceedings in the Senate chamber difficult to hear.

"My choice, my God," they chanted, along with signs that read: "I'm the parent. I call the shots" and "In God We Trust."

The crowd also broke out into song and prayer, including "The Star-Spangled Banner" and the Lord's Prayer.

They argue that the measure infringes on their rights as parents to decide what's best for their children. They also say they oppose the amended bill because it helps only wealthier families who can afford to send their kids to private schools. Lawmakers who support the bill say it is necessary to keep children safe amid recent outbreaks of some vaccine-preventable diseases. They have criticized "misinformation and hysteria swirling" around the bill. If the bill becomes law,

New Jersey would join five other states, including California and New York, to do away with a religious exemption.

Every state requires some vaccines for students, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, but exemptions

vary by state. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia allow for religious exemptions to immunizations, according to the conference.

According to New Jersey's Health Department, there are about 14,000 students who had a religious exemption in 2018-2019. That's 2.6% of the total number of enrolled students.

It's unclear whether Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy would support or reject the measure. His office did not return a message seeking comment.

The bill gained traction last year amid a nationwide measles outbreak. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said it was the greatest number of measles cases reported since 1992; New Jersey was among the hardest-hit states. Democrats will remain in control in the new session in Trenton, though they lost two Assembly seats and a Senate post in November's election. Both chambers must pass the bill Monday to send it to Murphy's desk. □

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Oklahoma attorney general sues distributors of opioids

By **KEN MILLER**

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) —

Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter on Monday brought a lawsuit against three distributors of opioids after winning a lawsuit against one drug manufacturer and reaching pretrial settlements in other cases. Hunter filed the lawsuit in Cleveland County District Court against Cardinal Health Inc., McKesson Corp. and AmerisourceBergen Corp.

"Oklahoma is in crisis. ... The source of this crisis is the flood of prescription opioids that has inundated Oklahoma for the past two decades," the lawsuit says. "It is a man-made crisis. It was brought into being by the pharmaceutical industry."

The lawsuit said the defendants "distributed what can only be called a major oversupply of opioids into Oklahoma."

Hunter's spokesman, Alex Gerszewski, said the com-



In this May 29, 2019, file photo, Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter watches a video deposition in Norman, Okla., during the state's trial against drugmakers blamed for contributing to the opioid crisis.

Associated Press

panies distributed opioids primarily to hospitals and pharmacies and were obligated to have a systems of checks and balances to alert them if there was a sharp, unexplained increase in opioid orders.

"We will show that these companies repeatedly ignored red flags and in doing so played a major role in breaking the dam of nar-

cotic conservatism when they flooded the country with opioids," Hunter said during a news conference announcing the suit.

McKesson said in a statement Monday that "any suggestion that (the company) drove demand for opioids in this country reflects a fundamental misunderstanding and mischaracterization of our role as

a distributor." Amerisource-Bergen said in a statement that "beyond our reporting and immediate halting of potentially suspicious orders, we refuse service to customers we deem as a diversion risk."

Cardinal Health said in a statement that it is prepared to "vigorously" defend itself at trial, adding it's "confident that the facts presented will show we take our role and the responsibility that comes with it seriously, work hard every day to get it right, and make changes when we find ways to improve."

The suit comes after Hunter won a lawsuit in August against opioid manufacturer Johnson & Johnson, which was ordered to pay \$465 million.

Both Hunter and Johnson & Johnson have appealed the ruling.

Hunter's office says the award is only enough to pay for one year of the state's opioid abatement plan. Johnson & Johnson

maintains the award should be reduced by \$355 million to offset pretrial settlements reached with other drugmakers. The state reached settlements last year of \$270 million with drugmaker Purdue Pharma and \$85 million with Israeli-owned Teva Pharmaceuticals.

An \$8.75 million settlement was reached last week with Endo Pharmaceuticals Inc. and Par Pharmaceutical, Inc., both subsidiaries of Dublin-based Endo International.

The Oklahoma lawsuit comes after Michigan in December sued opioid distributors Cardinal Health, McKesson Health, AmerisourceBergen, and Walgreen Co.

Opioids, including heroin and prescription drugs, were a factor in a record 48,000 deaths across the U.S. in 2017, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oklahoma recorded about 400 opioid deaths that year. □



In this July 16, 2019, file photo, people wait to apply for asylum in the United States along the border in Tijuana, Mexico.

Associated Press

By **ELLIOT SPAGAT**

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A U.S. judge ruled Monday that the Trump administration is operating within its authority when separating families stopped at the Mexico border, rejecting arguments that it was quietly returning to widespread practices that drew international condemnation. The American Civil Liberties Union argued that the administration was splitting families over dubious allegations and minor trans-

gressions including traffic offenses.

It asked the judge in July to rule on whether the government was justified in separating 911 children during the first year after the judge halted the general practice in June 2018. U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw indicated he was uncomfortable second-guessing government decisions to separate children on grounds that parents were considered unfit or dangerous, or in other limited circumstances

Judge refuses to second-guess family separations at border

like criminal history, communicable diseases and doubts about parentage. He found no evidence that the government was abusing its discretion.

"It is an invitation that is potentially massive in scope, invades an area that is particularly within the province of the executive branch to secure the nation's border, and goes beyond this court's class certification and preliminary injunction orders, which were focused on the administration's practice of separating families at the border for the purpose of deterring immigration, and failing to reunify those families," Sabraw wrote in a 26-page decision.

In a partial victory for the ACLU, the judge said the government must settle any doubts about parentage before separating families by using DNA tests that deliver results in about

90 minutes. The ruling was a rare instance of the San Diego judge siding with the administration. In June 2018, he halted the practice of separating families under a "zero tolerance" policy to deter illegal immigration and ordered that about 2,800 children be quickly reunited with family. Lack of adequate tracking systems at the time made reunification a monumental task.

The judge later ordered the administration to identify more than 1,500 additional children who were separated earlier in Trump's presidency, starting in July 2017. The government is providing information to the ACLU, which, in some cases, has volunteers going door to door in Guatemala.

The ACLU said it was considering its next move.

"The court strongly reaffirmed that the Trump ad-

ministration bears the burden if it attempts to separate families based on an accusation that the adult is not the child's parent," said ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt. "We are evaluating the decision to determine next steps on how to ensure that children are not separated from their parents based on minor infractions."

The Justice Department didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The judge noted that the administration acknowledged it erred by separating a mother who needed emergency surgery and a father who was HIV-positive. He rejected the ACLU's contention that some accusations of gang affiliation were unfounded, saying that the government relies on "objective evidence, not allegations or intuition." □

Authorities: Kosher store shooters planned attack for months

By DAVID PORTER
Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — The two people who fatally shot a police officer then killed three people at a kosher grocery in Jersey City planned an assault for some time and were equipped to cause greater destruction, authorities said Monday.

State and federal law enforcement officials revealed details about the months leading up to the shootings by David Anderson and Francine Graham, a couple who expressed hatred of Jews and law enforcement in notes left at the grocery shooting scene and in online posts.

"This was a senseless and cowardly act," U.S. Attorney Craig Carpenito said. Anderson, 47, and Graham, 50, shot and killed Jersey City Detective Joseph Seals in a chance meeting in a cemetery Dec. 10, then drove to the market and killed Mindel Ferencz, 31, who owned the store with her husband; Moshe Deutsch, 24, a rabbinical student from Brooklyn who was shopping there; and store employee Douglas Miguel Rodriguez.

Rodriguez held the back door open for a wounded

customer to escape before he was shot, authorities said Monday.

Five weapons and hundreds of rounds of ammunition were found in the store afterward. Investigators also found a bomb in the couple's van that could have sprayed shrapnel fragments "five football fields long," Gregory Ehrie, special agent in charge of the FBI in Newark, said. The van also contained materials that could have made a second bomb, he said.

It's not known for certain what prompted the confrontation between Seals and the shooters. Officials speculated that Seals, a 13-year veteran who was meeting someone about returning a car that had been impounded, may have stopped the U-Haul van Anderson and Graham were driving because it fit the description of a vehicle connected to the slaying of a livery car driver in Bayonne a few days earlier.

In doing so, Seals may have thrown off their plans and prevented more bloodshed, Carpenito said, but he did not provide more detail.

Anderson and Graham bludgeoned and then shot the livery driver Michael



U.S. Attorney Craig Carpenito, center, speaks at a new conference to provide an update on the Dec. 10 Jersey City shootings at the FBI headquarters in Newark, N.J., Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

Rumberger, 34, officials said, though it wasn't clear if he had been targeted. The pair also had done online research on a Jewish center in nearby Bayonne in the days before the attack in Jersey City, Carpenito said.

Barricaded in the kosher store, Anderson and Graham were killed after a lengthy gun battle with the police that sent the sound of gunfire booming for hours through the neighborhood in New Jersey's second-largest city, across the street from a school.

A gun recovered at the kosher grocery that was used by Anderson and Graham to kill Rumberger also was used to shoot out the windows of a car driven by a

Hasidic man on a highway near Jersey City, the investigation revealed. That man was not injured.

That shooting wasn't reported until investigators began probing the the market shootings.

"Up until the attack, there wasn't anything that would have put either of them on anybody's radar," Ehrie said.

But surveillance video showed Anderson and Graham had driven past the market in their rented U-Haul van twice in the week leading up to the shootings, Carpenito said.

At the scene, a note found on Anderson contained a reference to a 1990s documentary, "The FBI's War on Black America," which ex-

plored the FBI's targeting of individuals involved in the civil rights movement in the 1960s, Carpenito said. He added that a timestamp written on the note corresponded to a segment in the documentary where an interviewee advocates killing "fascist pig cops."

Investigators found among Anderson's social media posts a reference to Jews as "imposters who inhabited synagogues of Satan." Anderson received about \$560 per month as a military veteran and may have sold property and a van to make money, officials said, but investigators have found no evidence he received outside assistance to purchase weapons or bomb-making materials. □

Florida lawmakers debate if college athletes can be paid

By BOBBY CAINA CALVAN
TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) —

Florida lawmakers began considering on Monday whether they would allow college athletes to profit from their fame, a move that comes as the NCAA looks into possibly removing its longstanding prohibition against it. Florida would follow the lead of California, which last year ignored pleas by the NCAA to keep the prohibitions in place.

The NCAA had argued that allowing the practice "would erase the critical distinction between college and professional athletics" and would give California schools an unfair recruiting



Rep. Kionne McGhee, D- Miami, listens Monday, Jan. 13, 2020, during a combined meeting of House Commerce, Education and Judiciary Committees to discuss equal treatment of student athletes at the Knott Building in Tallahassee, Fla.

Associated Press

advantage.

College sports generat e

billions of dollars in revenue, including \$1 billion annually

for the NCAA. But none of that money is allowed to go to college athletes.

Similar efforts are underway in Georgia, Maryland, New York, South Carolina and Washington, among others. Members of Congress may also be taking up the effort. Under pressure, the NCAA last fall announced that it would take action to lift the money-making ban for the 450,000 athletes under its purview. But it did not commit to a specific timeline for doing so. As a result, Florida and other states are pressing ahead, just in case the NCAA later balks.

But there's also the matter of staying competitive,

particularly with California colleges that might now have an advantage in recruiting marquee players to their programs. That would be a big concern in sports-rabid states such as Florida, which has some of the country's highest-profile sports programs.

NCAA rules have long prevented players from hiring agents. The California law prevents athletes from losing scholarships or being thrown off teams because of endorsement deals. The law won't go into effect until 2023, which was meant to give the NCAA time to take its own steps to address the issue. □

Video: Iran police shoot at those protesting plane shutdown

By **JON GAMBRELL**

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Online videos appeared to show Iranian security forces firing live ammunition and tear gas to disperse protests as popular anger swelled Monday over the accidental shoot-down of a Ukrainian jetliner and Iran's failed attempt to conceal its role in the tragedy.

The unrest comes amid soaring tensions between Washington and Tehran that have raised fears of a war between the two countries after a U.S. airstrike killed Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani. Iran responded with a ballistic missile attack on two bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq, without hurting anyone. It accidentally shot down the plane hours later as it braced for a U.S. counter-attack that never came.

Videos sent to the New York-based Center for Human Rights in Iran and later verified by The Associated Press show a crowd of demonstrators near Azadi, or Freedom, Square fleeing as a tear gas canister lands among them. People cough and sputter while trying to escape the fumes, with one woman calling out in Farsi: "They fired tear gas at people! Azadi Square! Death to the dictator!"

Another video shows a woman being carried away in the aftermath as a trail of blood can be seen on the ground. Those around her cry out that she has been shot in the leg.

"Oh my God, she's bleeding nonstop!" one person shouts. Another shouts: "Bandage it!"

Photos and video after the incident show pools of blood on the sidewalk.

Tehran's police chief, Gen. Hossein Rahimi, later denied his officers opened fire.

"Police treated people who had gathered with patience and tolerance," Iranian media quoted Rahimi as saying. "Police did not shoot in the gatherings since broad-mindedness and restraint has been the agenda of the police forc-

es of the capital." However, the semi-official Fars news agency reported that police had "shot tear gas in some areas."

Fars, which is close to the Revolutionary Guard, carried videos showing dem-

demonstrators during previous waves of protests, including after an increase in gasoline prices in November, when more than 300 people were reportedly killed in a crackdown.

Ebrahim Raisi, the head

from senior officials about it. They are also mourning the dead, which included many young people who were studying abroad.

The first protest erupted in Tehran at what was initially billed as a candlelight vigil.



In this photograph taken Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020, a protester confronts an Iranian police officer while demonstrators gather in front of Amir Kabir University in Tehran, Iran, to remember victims of a Ukrainian airplane shot down by an Iranian missile.

Associated Press

onstrators chanting: "We are children of war. Fight with us, we will fight back." Another Fars video showed demonstrators in Tehran on Sunday night tearing down a poster of Soleimani, who had led the Guard's elite Quds Force.

The uniformed police were just one of several security forces deployed in large numbers after Iran belatedly admitted to shooting down the Ukrainian jetliner. Riot police in black uniforms and helmets gathered earlier Sunday in Vali-e Asr Square, at Tehran University and other landmarks. Revolutionary Guard members patrolled the city on motorbikes, and plainclothes security men were also out in force. Riot police and other security forces could be seen on the streets of Tehran on Monday as well.

The Guard has been accused of opening fire on

of Iran's judiciary, issued a warning to protesters, saying "the agents of America and agents of foreign countries" want to use anger over the plane disaster to "compromise" Iran's security. Iran often blames anti-government protests on foreign conspiracies.

The crash of the Ukraine International Airlines jet early Wednesday killed all 176 people on board, mostly Iranians and Iranian-Canadians. For three days, Iranian officials ruled out any strike on the plane, suggesting the crash of Flight 752 was caused by a technical failure. Only on Saturday did authorities acknowledge shooting it down, as evidence mounted and after Western leaders accused Iran of culpability.

Iranians have expressed anger over the downing of the plane and the misleading explanations

"They are lying that our enemy is America! Our enemy is right here!" students shouted.

Iranian authorities briefly arrested the British ambassador, who said he went to the vigil to pay his respects and left as soon as the chanting began.

Iran's Foreign Ministry summoned the British ambassador on Sunday to protest what it said was his presence at an illegal event. Britain summoned Iran's ambassador on Monday "to convey our strong objections" over the weekend arrest.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's spokesman, James Slack, said the detention of Ambassador Rob Macaire was "an unacceptable breach of the Vienna Convention."

"We are seeking full assurances from the Iranian government that it will nev-

er happen again," he said. Ali Rabiei, a government spokesman, insisted Iran's civilian officials only learned Friday that the Guard shot down the plane.

"The point is that we did not lie," Rabiei said. He went on to blame the U.S. for "spreading the shadow of war over Iran."

Javad Kashi, a professor of politics at Tehran Allameh University, wrote online that people should be allowed to express their anger in public protests.

"Buckled under the pressure of humiliation and being ignored, people poured into the streets with so much anger," he wrote. "Let them cry as much as they want." There's also been grief and anger from Iran's creative community.

Some artists, including famed director Masoud Kimiai, withdrew from an upcoming international film festival. Two state TV hosts resigned in protest over the false reporting about what happened to Flight 752.

Taraneh Alidoosti, one of Iran's most famous actresses, posted a picture of a black square on Instagram with the caption: "We are not citizens. We are hostages. Millions of hostages."

Saeed Maroof, the captain of Iran's national volleyball team, also wrote on Instagram: "I wish I could be hopeful that this was the last scene of the show of deceit and lack of wisdom of these incompetents but I still know it is not."

He said that despite the qualification of Iran's national team for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics after years of effort, "there is no energy left in our sad and desperate souls to celebrate."

Another video making the rounds showed the national symbol of Iran, four crescents and a sword, in the shape of a water lily flying through what appeared to be a 1980s-style video game like "Galaga." Music chimes when it touches oil as it fires on symbols representing people, knowledge and ultimately an airplane. "To be continued," the caption at the end of the clip reads. □

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U.S. troops clear rubble from Iraq base days after Iran strike

By **QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA** and **ALI ABDUL-HASSAN**
Associated Press

AIN AL-ASAD BASE, Iraq (AP) — U.S. troops cleared rubble and debris from a military base housing American soldiers in western Iraq on Monday, days after it was struck by a barrage of Iranian ballistic missiles in a major escalation between the two longtime foes. The Iranian attack was in retaliation for the U.S. drone strike near Baghdad airport that killed a top Iranian commander, Gen. Qassem Soleimani, prompting angry calls to avenge his slaying. An Associated Press crew touring the Ain al-Asad base Monday saw large craters in the ground and damaged military trailers as well as forklifts lifting rubble and loading it onto trucks from a large area the size

of a football stadium. U.S. soldiers inspected portable housing units destroyed and burned by the missile attack.

The air base in Iraq's western Anbar province is a sprawling complex about 180 kilometers (110 miles) west of Baghdad shared with the Iraqi military and housing about 1,500 members of the U.S. military and the U.S.-led coalition fighting the Islamic State militant group.

It was struck by Iranian missiles on Wednesday in Iran's most direct assault on America since the 1979 seizing of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

The proxy attack raised fears of a wider war in the Middle East although both sides have since then indicated that neither side would seek further retali-

ation, at least in the short term. The U.S. said no American soldiers were killed or wounded in the Iranian attack.

"There were more than 10 large missiles fired and the impact hit several areas along the airfield," said Col. Myles Caggins, a spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria. He added that the explosions created large craters, knocked over concrete barriers and destroyed facilities that house dozens of soldiers.

One of the missiles hit near an airstrip where six drones were parked, causing no damage.

Although no soldiers were killed, he said several were treated for concussions from the blast and are being assessed by profession-



A bulldozer clears rubble and debris at Ain al-Asad air base in Anbar, Iraq, Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

als. Caggins added that troops received notification the missiles were on their way thanks to early warning systems, and troops were moved out of harm's way. He described soldiers who lived through the attack as "warriors."

The Ain al-Asad air base was first used by American forces after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion that toppled

dictator Saddam Hussein, and later saw American troops stationed there amid the fight against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

President Donald Trump visited the sprawling air base in December 2018, making his first presidential visit to troops in the region.

Vice President Mike Pence has also visited the base. □

Al-Shabab extremists kill 3 teachers in Kenya, abduct 1

By **TOM ODULA**
Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Al-Shabab extremists killed three people in an assault early Monday in eastern Kenya, its fifth attack in thirteen days, police said. The militants from neighboring Somalia attacked Kamuthe town in Garissa county at 2 a.m., setting fire to a police post and destroying a telecommunication mast, police said in a report seen by The Associated Press.

Three non-Muslim teachers were killed and a Muslim one was abducted, the report said. Another teacher was wounded. The at-

tackers spared the life of a female nurse due to her gender, it added.

Al-Shabab is claiming responsibility for the attack in a terse statement within its "latest news" posted Monday on its official website, Shahada.

Al-Shabab has vowed retribution on Kenya for sending troops to Somalia since 2011 to fight the militants. The group has carried out numerous attacks on Kenya, killing hundreds.

Earlier this month, the al-Qaida-linked group attacked a military base used by Kenyan and U.S. forces, killing three Americans and destroying air-

craft and other machinery.

Since December, al-Shabab has increased the frequency of its attacks in five Kenyan counties that border Somalia and that the government has named as hotspots for extremism. They are Lamu, Garissa, Wajir, Tana River and Mandera counties. Kenya's security forces have been caught inadequately prepared for the recent attacks in these counties, said security analyst and former U.S. Marine Andrew Franklin, who is a longtime resident in Kenya.

The extremist group, which



A member of Kenya's security forces walks past a damaged police post after an attack by al-Shabab extremists in the settlement of Kamuthe in Garissa county, Kenya Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

is based in Somalia, has waged an increasingly effective eight-year violent campaign and the

Kenyan government has failed to treat this threat with the seriousness it deserves, said Franklin. □



Podemos (United We Can) leader Pablo Iglesias, centre, flanked by new Health Minister Salvador Illa, left and Podemos member Alberto Garçon, minister of consumption pose with their ministerial briefcases in Madrid, Spain, Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

Despite differences, Spain gets its new coalition government

By C. GILES and A. PARRA
Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Spain's first coalition government in the four decades since the return of democracy took shape Monday as 22 Cabinet ministers took their oaths of office.

Questions though remained as to whether the government of two left-wing parties can see out its four-year term as it is a minority administration and confronts an array of vexing issues that could well lead to tensions in the coalition.

Beyond handling separatist tensions in the economically powerful northeastern region of Catalonia and recharging what is the fourth largest economy in the eurozone, Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez has a tricky task in maintaining the support of his coalition partner, Pablo Iglesias, the leader of the anti-austerity United We Can party.

"Either they cooperate or they will open the door to a right-wing coalition supported by the far-right," said Ana Sofía Cárdenal, a political science lecturer with Catalonia's UOC university. "A failure of the coalition would dent the credibility of United We Can and damage the reputation of the Socialists."

Catalonia is, by far, the biggest immediate problem — and one that will demand unity within the government.

Sánchez secured his government last week by two votes, the slimmest majority of any Spanish prime minister in recent decades. He did it thanks to the abstention of 13 members of the pro-Catalan independence ERC party on the promise that he would sit and talk with them about how to resolve Spain's most serious internal issue since the return to democracy in 1978.

The ERC, which has several leading members jailed for an illegal independence push in 2017, insists on self-determination for Catalonia, something the Spanish Constitution and Sánchez rules out.

What the Socialists can legally offer to keep the ERC from voting against the government is still unknown.

On the economic front, Spain is still among Europe's healthy economies, with growth of around 2% in 2019. The government's chief problem is getting a budget through that will satisfy the European Union, investors as well as fulfilling the social promises it has been made, from raising

pensions to increasing civil servants' wages and the basic minimum wage.

Sánchez will be mindful that his first attempt at government last year collapsed when the ERC voted down his 2019 spending plan.

Sánchez and his chief aides will also have a challenge in maintaining the relationship with United We Can, an upstart party that has got many of its votes from the 140-year-old socialists. When the two parties failed in their first attempt to form a coalition, Sánchez said that neither he nor 95% of Spaniards would be able to sleep at night having Iglesias and his inexperienced colleagues in charge of important ministries.

But five months later, Sánchez took many by surprise when days after the Nov. 10 general election he embraced Iglesias on signing a coalition deal.

Both parties lost seats in the last election and possibly sensed that a further slide could see a right-wing government take power in Madrid.

A major sticking point could be Iglesias' support for a referendum in Catalonia. Curtailing abusive house rents and accommodating more migrants are two other demands the Socialists may find hard to meet. □



Protesters hold banners outside Westminster Magistrates Court in London, where Julian Assange is due to appear, Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

WikiLeaks' Assange in UK court fighting extradition to USA

By GREGORY KATZ
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange made a brief court appearance Monday in his bid to prevent extradition to the United States to face serious espionage charges.

He and his lawyers complained they weren't being given enough time to meet to plan their battle against U.S. prosecutors seeking to put him on trial for WikiLeaks' publication of hundreds of thousands of confidential documents.

The 48-year-old was brought to court from Belmarsh Prison on the outskirts of London. He saluted the public gallery, which was packed with ardent supporters including the musician MIA, when he entered the courtroom. He later raised his right fist in defiance when he was taken to holding cells to meet with lawyer Gareth Peirce.

Peirce said officials at Belmarsh Prison are making it extremely difficult for her to meet with Assange. "We have pushed Belmarsh in every way — it is a breach of a defendant's rights," she said.

Assange refrained from making political statements. He confirmed his name and date of birth, and at one point said he didn't understand all of the proceedings against him during the brief hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court.

He faces 18 charges in the U.S., including conspiring to hack into a Pentagon computer. He has denied wrongdoing, claiming he was acting as a journalist entitled to First Amendment protection.

Many advocacy groups have supported Assange's claim that the charges would have a chilling effect on freedom of the press.

A five-day extradition hearing is scheduled for late February. Assange's legal team has tried to delay the hearing so there is more time to prepare, but these requests have been denied.

Assange has already served a 50-week prison sentence in Britain for jumping bail. A rape investigation launched against him in Sweden has been dropped, so he would likely be freed from prison if extradition is denied. □

Lava gushes from volcano near Manila; tens of thousands flee

By JOEAL CALUPITAN and JIM GOMEZ

Associated Press

TAGAYTAY, Philippines (AP)

— Red-hot lava spewed from a volcano near the Philippine capital of Manila on Monday as tens of thousands of people fled through heavy ash and frightening tremors, and authorities made plans to evacuate hundreds of thousands more for fear of a bigger eruption.

Clouds of ash from the Taal volcano reached Manila, 65 kilometers (40 miles) to the north, on Sunday, forcing the shutdown of the country's main airport, with more than 500 flights canceled. The airport partially reopened Monday after the ashfall eased.

There were no immediate reports of any deaths or major damage directly blamed on the eruption. A truck, however, skidded out of control on an ash-blanketed road, killing the driver and injuring three companions in Laguna province in an accident police said may have been linked to slippery conditions.

The government's disaster-response agency and other officials reported more than 30,000 villagers fled their homes in the hard-hit province of Batangas and nearby Cavite province. Officials expected the number to swell.

Some residents could not immediately flee their ash-



A family rides their motorcycle through clouds of ash as they evacuate to safer grounds as Taal volcano in Tagaytay, Cavite province, southern Philippines on Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

blanketed villages because of a lack of transportation and poor visibility. Others refused to leave their homes and farms.

"We have a problem — our people are panicking due to the volcano because they want to save their livelihood, their pigs and herds of cows," Mayor Wilson Maralit of the town of Balete told DZMM radio. "We're trying to stop them from returning and warning that the volcano can explode again any time and hit them."

Maralit, whose town lies along the shoreline of Taal Lake, which surrounds the erupting volcano, ap-

pealed for troops and more police to stop people from sneaking back to their villages.

After a cleanup and a shift of ash-laden winds away from Manila, officials partially reopened the main airport and allowed planes to take off. President Rodrigo Duterte's aircraft was able to land in Manila on Monday from his hometown of Davao, his spokesman said, adding he saw the extent of the disaster from the plane.

Taal suddenly rumbled back to life on Sunday, blasting steam, ash and pebbles up to 10 to 15 kilometers (6 to 9 miles) into

the sky, according to the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

On Monday, the ash and steam column reached a height of 2 kilometers (about a mile), with lava fountains spurting less than half of that height before falling into the lake waters surrounding the main crater. Lava also spurted from another vent north of the main crater, said Renato Solidum, who heads the institute.

Frequent tremors and a buildup of pressure of the 1,020-foot (311-meter) volcano, one of the world's smallest, however, indicated a major and much

more dangerous eruption could still happen, he said.

The government volcano-monitoring agency raised the danger level around Taal three notches on Sunday to Level 4, indicating a hazardous eruption within hours to days was possible. Level 5, the highest, means such an eruption is underway. Irene de Claro, a mother of four, worried about her father, who stayed behind in their village in Agoncillo while the rest of the family fled.

"My father is missing. We don't know, too, what happened to our house because the ash was up to our knees, it was very dark and the ground was constantly shaking when we left," de Castro said at a school in the town of Lemery. "Most likely there's nothing for us to return to. We're back to zero."

The small island where the volcano lies has long been designated a "permanent danger zone," though fishing villages have existed there for years. Those residents were all evacuated, volcanology officials said, adding that there should be a total evacuation, too, of endangered communities within a 14-kilometer (8.7-mile) radius of Taal. Government work was suspended and schools closed in a wide swath of towns and cities, including Manila, because of the health risks from the ash. □

Germany's Siemens to fulfill Australia coal mine contract

BERLIN (AP) — Germany's Siemens has decided to stand by a contract linked to a coal mine in Australia that climate activists had called for it to drop.

The German industrial conglomerate's CEO, Joe Kaeser, had promised to review Siemens' involvement in the project in light of climate activists' opposition. But in a statement late Sunday, Kaeser said that "there is practically no legally and economically responsible way to unwind the contract without neglecting fi-

duciary duties."

Siemens on Dec. 10 signed the contract to supply signaling systems for a rail link between the Carmichael coal mine and a port. The vast mine is owned by Indian company Adani, and the contract is worth about 18 million euros (\$20 million) to Siemens.

Kaeser wrote that there were competitors — "thus, whether or not Siemens provides the signaling, the project will still go ahead." But he added after a managing board meeting that,

"given the importance of legitimate environmental concerns, we have secured the right to pull out of the contract if our customer violates the very stringent environmental obligations." The group Fridays for Future, which has held weekly protests demanding action against climate change for over a year, wanted Siemens to quit the mine project because emissions from coal-fired power plants contribute to global warming. Kaeser met the group's representatives on



Joe Kaeser, CEO of Siemens, addresses the media during a statement in Berlin, Germany, Friday, Jan. 10, 2020.

Associated Press

Friday. Leading Fridays for Future activist Luisa Neubauer called Kaeser's decision

"disastrous" and said the group planned new demonstrations in front of Siemens offices Monday. □

Monument to honor U.S.-Mexican dual citizens slain in Mexico

By **CHRISTIAN TORRES** and **PETER ORSI**

Associated Press

LA MORA, Mexico (AP) —

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said Sunday that a monument will be put up to memorialize nine U.S.-Mexican dual citizens ambushed and slain last year by suspected drug gang assassins along a remote road in the northern border region near New Mexico.

In remarks to members of the small town of La Mora, which was shattered by the Nov. 4 killings of three women and six children from the extended Langford, LeBarón and Miller families, López Obrador said the first goal is to bring those responsible to justice.

Speaking after meeting with victims' relatives, the president said an agreement had been reached with municipal and Sonora state officials to establish a monument of some sort "here where these lamentable and painful events took place," and also for special recognition of those who risked their lives to rush to the aid of victims and survivors.

"So that we exalt this, the true solidarity: He who is willing to give his life for another," López Obrador said. He promised to meet with family members in two months to give them another in-person update on



Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador speaks during his visit to the small town of La Mora, Sonora state, Mexico, Sunday Jan. 12, 2020.

Associated Press

the investigation and to return in four to six months to present a plan on regional development including road improvements.

The mostly bilingual American-Mexicans have lived in northern Mexico for decades and consider themselves Mormons, though they are not affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The community's origins in Mexico date to the official end of polygamy over a century ago by the LDS church, which prompted many families that continued the practice to es-

tablish colonies elsewhere. Many of those in northern Mexico have by now, over the generations, abandoned polygamy as well.

La Mora is a hamlet of about 300 people in Sonora state while Colonia LeBaron is a larger town of over 2,000 on the other side of the mountains in Chihuahua; the two are linked by a bone-jarring and treacherous dirt road where the attack occurred as the women and children were traveling to visit relatives.

The areas lie in the territory of rival drug gangs with the Sinaloa cartel of convicted

kingpin Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán holding sway in Sonora and the Juarez cartel dominant in Chihuahua. The killings sowed grief and fear in the tightly knit communities, and dozens fled La Mora for the United States in the subsequent days out of concerns for their safety. What was once a tranquil and even idyllic life in a fertile river valley surrounded by mountains and desert scrub had grown increasingly tenuous as criminal gangs exerted their influence and fought each other, some said.

"Broken hearts, defeated,

and through the fault of crime. I personally do not understand how so many people continue to die in such a beautiful country, such good people and with such richness," community member Margaret Langford said at Sunday's ceremony. "I was born in Chihuahua but I have been living for 20 years here in La Mora, a place that was so tranquil and neighbors we treasure so much."

"I love this country and it pains me to my soul to think of not being able to live here," Langford said. "This massacre has left us lost and destroyed. I ask God that it not be what defines our community.."

Mexico has been posting homicide totals in recent years at all-time highs since comparable records began to be kept in the 1990s. López Obrador repeated Sunday that his security strategy aims to address root causes of violence such as poverty, inequality and lack of opportunity, particularly for young people, rather than the military offensive launched in 2006 by then-President Felipe Calderón and continued under López Obrador's predecessor, Enrique Peña Nieto.

"Deprive the fish of water," the president said "so there are no longer young people who want to be cartel killers." □



A cargo ship finishes its transit through the Panama Canal on the Pacific side, seen from Panama City, Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

By **JUAN ZAMORANO**

PANAMA CITY (AP) —

The Panama Canal will begin collecting a freshwater surcharge from ships transiting the interoceanic

waterway, authorities announced Monday, as part of actions to address a scarcity of rainfall after the surrounding watershed recorded its fifth driest year of

Panama Canal announces freshwater surcharge amid scant rains

the last seven decades in 2019. Canal administrator Ricaurte Vásquez said the new measure aims to protect the supply of freshwater for shipping activity and human consumption.

"It is not an easy decision," Vásquez said. He added that it will "guarantee the availability of water and the reliability of the (canal) route."

The new fee will take effect Feb. 15 and has no expiration date. It applies to all vessels over 125 feet in length and consists of a fixed charge of \$10,000

per passage plus another variable charge that will depend on water levels at Lake Gatun at the time of the crossing.

"The level of the surcharge drops when the level of the lake is at full capacity," Vásquez said.

The Canal Authority presented its annual report last week highlighting that 2019 was one of the watershed's lowest rain years in many decades, about 20% below the historic average.

The watershed, a system of rivers and brooks that feed lakes, is key to canal

operations and also supplies freshwater to Panama City, home to about half the country's population of 4 million.

Vásquez has warned that climate change is a threat to the canal's operations. Authorities have not yet determined whether drafting restrictions on vessels, which were implemented in 2019 due to low levels at Lake Gatun, will be necessary this year.

The surcharge could lead to a reduction in traffic through the 105-year-old waterway. □

LOCAL



Urban Chic in Tropical Beach Décor: Coral Shell Condominiums is made with Family Love



ORANJESTAD —The Caribbean is a paradisiacal place where anyone would like to own their own condo to enjoy family, retirement, sun, sand and sea, and leisure. Making the perfect choice for that perfect place in the jungle of offerings can be a hassle. Well, in case you are looking for the best in all senses, Coral Shell is a must-see. We will tell you why.

The best comes from the heart and in the case of Coral Shell Condominiums it is the owners who built this place as their own home. Actually it is their own home as they will live in one of the exclusive condominiums themselves. Marisabel and Albert are a warm, genuine, hard-working and driven-by-perfectionism and passion kind of couple. They do not only care for the luxury private residence they are building but take the environment into consideration in their concept as they are the park-keepers of the adjacent Boy Ecury Park. Aruba Today was shown around by the owner who while explaining all the beauty that surrounds us mentions he is a medical specialist in origin. That explains his accuracy with every tiny detail and his decision for only the best quality products. There are 16 apartments in the range from one, two, three, four and five bedrooms.

The building

The building is unique with 2 centimeter thick marble floors, exterior façade in Dominican Coral Stone, walls with concrete blocks – not dry wall, double glass windows with UV protection and sound control, a double system of air conditioning, sound control and waterproof mat under marble floor to isolate noise, fire and gas detectors in all apartments, laundry rooms and each kitchen has an InSinkErator.

The impeccable architecture is inspiring; appearing to have an art-museum vibe. Correct, says Albert, the architect is inspired by Spanish artist Gaudi among others. The walls seem to flow in a natural way and fit perfectly into the sun-lit place and surrounding colors of nature. The kitchens are all 100% Italian brand and even installed by Italians who call this place "Palazzo". "They said to have installed kitchens all over the world but never saw a condominium residence where all is matched so perfectly," the owners say. "I can say with pride that this is the most exclusive condominium in the Caribbean."

The location

You have a priceless view offering 180 degrees that gives you a turquoise ocean, big blue sky, lush green gardens and the Linear Park urban walkway. Open air, sea, sand, city and more sea ... all in one. Stroll in Boy Ecury Park, play with the children in Linear Park, take a dive in the ocean just in front of you and walk to one of the many restaurants that are close-by. Coral Shell has all the options in one. Most of the time you have to make a choice between a seaside location, urban environment or inland greens but here you have it all. Did we mention you have your private parking under the roof? Also there is round-the clock security guard and video surveillance. How about the Infinity pool with hydro jets and the outdoor terrace with bar, sun deck, fitness center and multipurpose court? Now we did. You must see it for yourself to experience the magic of Coral Shell, the owners will be honored to guide you around! ☐



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Article by Etnia Nativa

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Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Ornamental trees

Episode III -52

ORANJESTAD — There are numerous ornamental trees that play such a fundamental role in garden landscapes, providing beauty in the form of often spectacular flowers and also a wide range of shapes and textures.

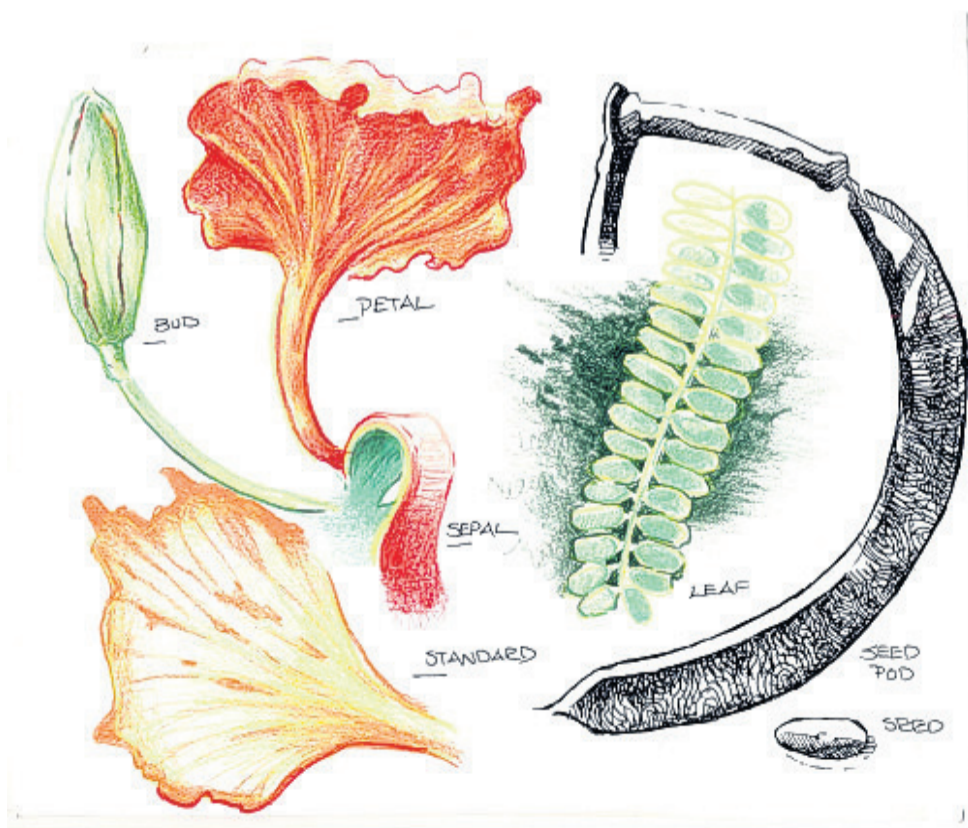
Over the past three or four centuries such trees have spread from their original habitats throughout the tropics, so that today's gardener has an extensive variety of choices from places you may never have seen. The famous Flamboyant, or Flame Tree (*Delonix regia*), for example, comes from Madagascar. In English known as Flame tree, Gold mohar, Julu tree, Peacock flower and Royal Poinciana.

The flamboyant tree has been described as one of the loveliest and most colorful trees in the world. With a blaze of yellow to crimson red blossoms and delicate fern-like leaves, the magnificent flowers graces Aruba from April until September and all around the earth in tropical climates.

Adapted to local conditions this large tree, which naturally assumes a spreading umbrella shape, originated in Madagascar and is now found in many Aruban gardens. It can grow as tall as 18 meters and has smooth greyish-colored bark and attractive feathery, fern-like leaves, which drop annually during the dry season. At the same time as the new leaves appear, the tree is covered with masses of five petal led flowers that are usually bright red-orange but may also appear in pale apricot. Blooming is followed by long, flattened, leathery dark brown or black seed pods. It's host for lac-insect. It's a good tree to control soil erosion in the semi-arid and arid areas.

Flamboyant requires full sun and adequate space to take its characteristic form.

Flamboyant trees are very hardy and pest-resistant and grow well in a wide variety of well-drained soils from acid to alkaline and from loamy to gravelly and, if managed well, even in the dark clay-like soil in parts of Aruba. The trees are tolerant to draught and may be grown close to the sea, but not right on the beach. Flamboyant trees are not able to survive in zones that go below 45 degrees Fahrenheit. In windy areas, trees are susceptible to branch breakage.



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Ornamental trees

Continued from Page 14

It is easy to plant a flamboyant tree. Start with a closed pod, open the pod and remove the seeds. The seeds have a high germination rate for several years. The seeds grow faster when they are either nicked with a knife or rubbed for about fifteen seconds with sandpaper then soaked overnight. Alternatively you may place the seeds in a pot of water, bring it to the boiling point, remove the pan from the heat source, and leave the seeds in the water until it is cooled. Once the water is drained the seeds are ready to plant; plant them in a location that receives full sun. Plant three or four seeds per tree and thin to the strongest one once they have sprouted. Trees may also be grown from branch cuttings of the tree. It is advised not to plant flamboyant trees close to sidewalks as the shallow roots may protrude through

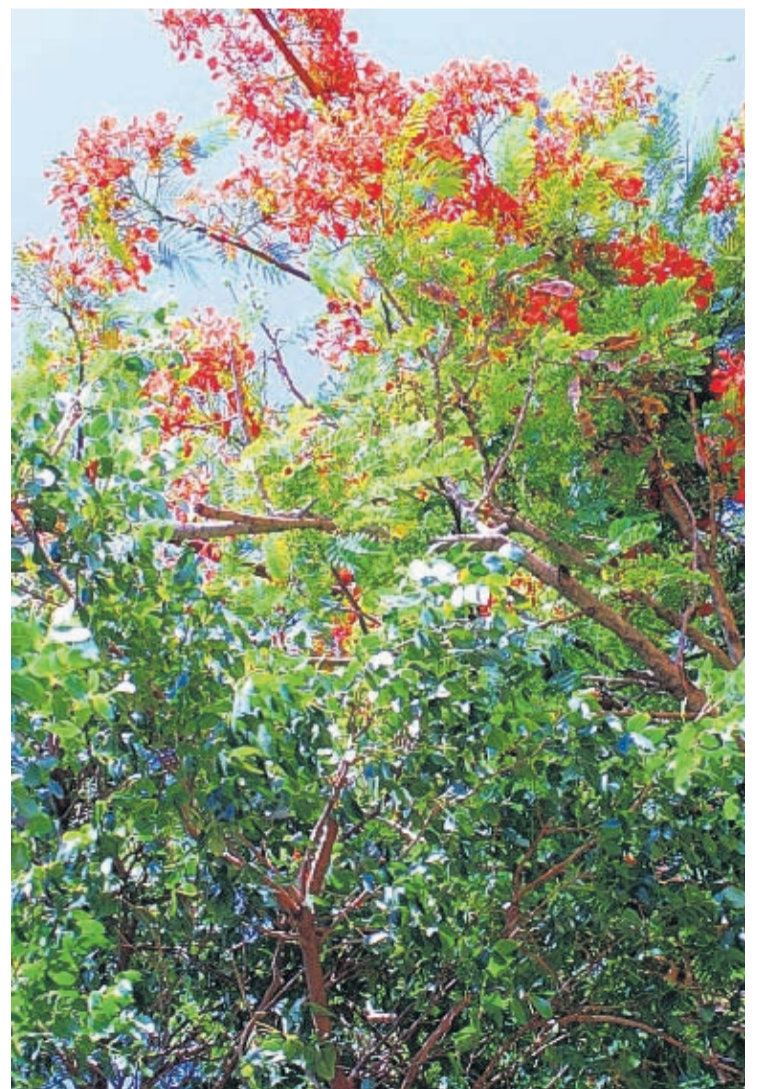


the sidewalk and present a tripping hazard. In addition to providing delightful dappled shade all year and a profusion of flowers for almost half of the year, the bark and flowers of the tree are rich in phytochemicals and flavonoids and contain antimicrobial, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and have been used for hepatic protection and as a treatment for diarrhea. The dried pods on the tree produce a nice crackling sound in the wind and are

easily gathered on the ground to be used as a fuel for fire.

The extract of *Delonix regia* is known to have medicinal properties. The plant is used in several countries to prepare extracts with antimicrobial and antifungal activities. *Delonix regia* Rafin, with an impressive range of medicinal and biological properties, has been used in the folk medicine systems of several civilizations like for the treatment of constipation, inflammation, arthritis, hemiplegia, leucorrhoea and rheumatism. To get to know more about Aruba's and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session which has been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etnianaativa03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels. □

Episode III -52



'Masha Danki' for choosing Aruba



PALM BEACH — Recently, Aruba Tourism Authority representative, Marouska Heyliger, had the great pleasure in honoring many loyal Aruba visitors with their distinctive certificates.

These certificates are a way to say 'Masha Danki' for continuously choosing

Aruba as a favorite vacation destination. The titles are as following: 10+ years 'Distinguished Visitor', 20+ years 'Goodwill Ambassador' and 35+ years 'Emerald Ambassador'.

The honorees were **Gene and JoAnn Taylor** from Pennsylvania honored as Goodwill Ambassadors.



Daniel and Pamela Bender from New York honored as Emerald Ambassadors.

The honorees stated that they love coming to the island for its friendly people, beautiful weather and the

feeling of home away from home.

Heyliger together with Luigi Heredia, General Manager of the Costa Linda Beach Resort, presented the hon-

orees with the honorary certificate and handed over some presents as a token of appreciation for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination for so many years. □

Ling & Sons Food Market offers freshest lunch



ORANJESTAD — Ling & Sons Food Market has undergone a tremendous metamorphose with a fresh, great-looking interior style, hot new food items and a pick-your-own fresh lunch corner.

Whether you are into a fresh, crisp salad or a hot meal: this is the perfect place to pick your own lunch. Create your combination of among others greens, quinoa, pasta salad, potato salad, crab salad, red cabbage, eggs, sweet corn, several cheeses and a selection



of tasteful dressings. On the other side of the salad bar you will find a wide array of olives, filled peppers and pickles while another bar tempts you into fresh-prepared hot food items like chicken, stews, fish, pasta, rice, veggies and much more. Check out their Facebook page for the daily menu and go get your great value lunch. Ling & Sons is known for its quality products from all over the world. It is groceries like home. Note that every Tuesday the Food Market offers 20 % off fruits and veggies and each Thursday the same discount applies to all meats. It's a Red Thursday indeed! □

Like Us on Facebook!

ORANJESTAD – Did you know Aruba Today has a Facebook page and website. We would love to welcome you to our online community!

The cover picture of the Aruba Today Facebook page will show a picture of a local photographer every couple of months. We just love culture and would like to support our local talents, therefore Aruba Today chooses to be a platform for showcasing art. The current cover picture is the work of the talented Jeroen Lucas from Aruba Paradise Photos. Before him we had the honor to showcase pictures of photographers Michael-Anthony, Anuar Habibe, Armando Goedgedrag and Jonathan Petit.

Jeroen Lucas is a Dutch photographer,



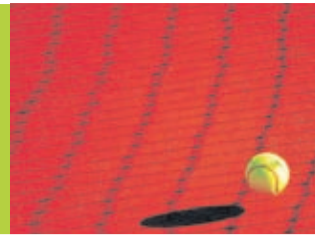
based in Aruba. Out of love for photography together with love for the island Aruba, Aruba Paradise Photos was born in 2015. "Taking my camera and drone with me as I explore every inch of the island. With free time at hand and lots of energy I want to shoot beautiful images of our Island for you to enjoy." Going to spots that you have never seen before, or even think "Is that in Aruba?!" Lucas is trying to give you that something extra. Looking at his pictures Aruba Today can only say: yes, this is something extra indeed! □

Aruba To Me Is

We would also like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island. Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

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SPORTS



Hinch, GM fired for Astros sign stealing after MLB bans pair

By R. BLUM and K. RIEKEN
AP Sports Writers

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Astros' sign-stealing scandal cost manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow their jobs, and Boston Red Sox manager Alex Cora could be next.

Hinch and Luhnow were fired Monday after being suspended by Major League Baseball for the team's illicit use of electronics to steal signs during Houston's run to the 2017 World Series title and again in the 2018 season.

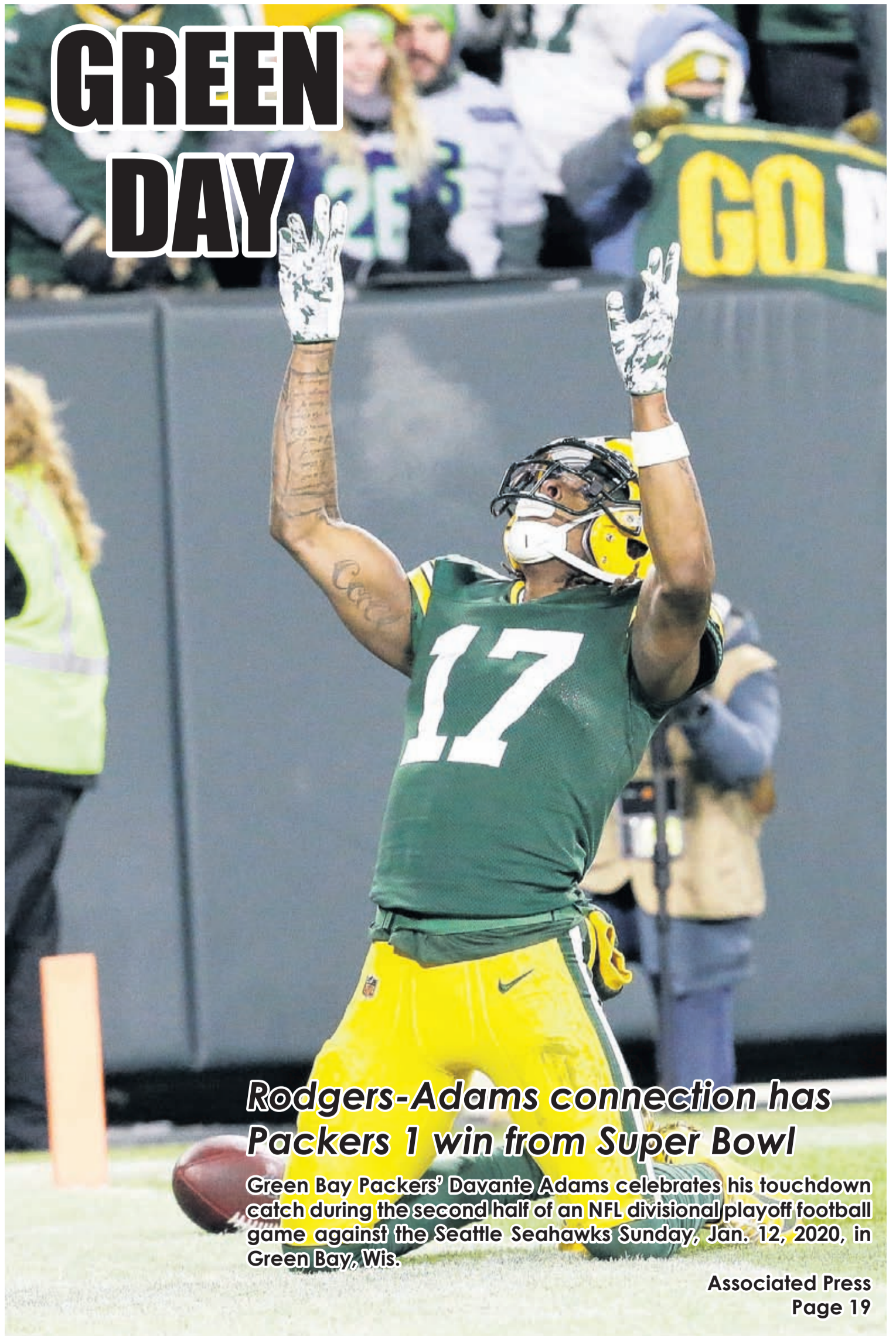
In U.S. sports' largest scandal since the New England Patriots' "Spygate," MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred announced the discipline and strongly hinted that Cora — the Astros bench coach in 2017 — will face equal or more severe punishment. Manfred said Cora developed the sign-stealing system used by the Astros. The Red Sox are under investigation for stealing signs in Cora's first season as manager in 2018, when Boston won the World Series.

Houston was fined \$5 million, the maximum allowed under the Major League Constitution, as punishment. The Astros will also forfeit their next two first- and second-round amateur draft picks.

The investigation found that the Astros used the video feed from a center field camera to see and decode the opposing catcher's signs.

Continued on Page 23

GREEN DAY



Rodgers-Adams connection has Packers 1 win from Super Bowl

Green Bay Packers' Davante Adams celebrates his touchdown catch during the second half of an NFL divisional playoff football game against the Seattle Seahawks Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020, in Green Bay, Wis.

Associated Press
Page 19

Cameron Smith wins Sony Open in another Hawaii comeback

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

HONOLULU (AP) — Two weeks in Hawaii brought rain, unusually strong wind, playoffs and two players who thought victory was out of reach until the winner's lei was draped around their necks.

Cameron Smith was the latest Sunday at the Sony Open. He might have been even more surprised than Justin Thomas, who got a second chance when he won a playoff at Kapalua.

"Two or three holes left, I really didn't think there was much of a shot," Smith said after his playoff victory over Brendan Steele on rain-soaked Waialae Country Club. "I knew I had to play some good golf. It just kind of all fell into place."

Smith was 4-over par just two holes into the tournament Thursday, and his focus turned to making birdies that would give him a chance to salvage his round and raise money for the wildfires in his native Australia. Smith and Marc Leishman had pledged \$500 for every birdie to help raise money.

He twice pulled within shot of the lead at various points Sunday, but it looked like a lost cause when Steele had a two-shot lead with two holes to play.

"I thought I had to birdie 17 and then do something really good on 18," Smith said. "You never know what can happen."

Just about everything did in the final hour, which is about how long it took to play the last two holes. It rained every day since Tuesday, and the rain was so steady on Sunday the PGA Tour moved the hole location from its traditional spot to higher ground, and the green still had to be rolled with sponges between groups.

Steele missed a 6-foot par putt on the 17th, and his lead was down to one shot. In the group ahead, Simpson's wedge into the par-5 18th skipped off sheen of water and settled 15 feet behind the hole for a birdie attempt he narrowly missed. He shot 67.

Palmer never even had that opportunity. His fairway metal from a bunker sailed so far right that he



Cameron Smith holds the champions trophy after the final round of the Sony Open PGA Tour golf event, Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020, at Waialae Country Club in Honolulu.

hit the metal railing atop a massive video screen, sailed well to the right of the corporate tents and was lost, presumably in a back yard. He had to go back to the bunker and made bogey for a 68.

Steele was trying to figure out what happened to Palmer, and then he did the opposite. He pulled a 2-iron so wildly to the left that it was near the ropes

lining the 10th fairway. After a free drop, he hit wedge off the muddy lie to 30 feet, taking a reasonable birdie putt out of the equation. His par gave him a 71 and opened the way for Smith. The 26-year-old Australian delivered with a long bunker over the forming puddles to 8 feet, and Smith poured it in for a 68 to force the second straight playoff in Hawaii, and the third straight dating to end of last year.

Steele, who led by as many as three shots when he holed a bunker shot for birdie on the 11th, made no excuses for his approach to the 18th.

"Lie was good, water was fine," he said. "It's just a 2-iron to win a golf tournament. Just a hard shot."

Equally hard was the playoff hole, which was No. 10 because of the water on the 18th green. Steele again looked to have the advantage with a great drive that left him 88 yards away in the fairway, with Smith over by the trees in the right rough. Smith chased a shot low and onto the green to 10 feet.

Steele, so used to having a blast of wind in his face on that hole, tried to get a shot to the back tier toward the pin, because anything

less would spin back to the lower tier. Instead, it sailed over the green, he chipped some 15 feet by the hole and missed his par putt.

And there was Smith, who an hour or so earlier had stood on the 17th tee wondering how he could win from two shots behind, and now was two putts and 10 feet away from a PGA Tour victory he could call his own. He twice won the Australian PGA Championship. He shared a team title with Jonas Blixt three years ago in New Orleans.

"My first individual win on the PGA Tour, it's definitely going to be one I never forget," Smith said. "Given the conditions and how tough it was, I'll draw back on this in the future."

For the week, Smith made 21 birdies for \$10,500 toward the Australian fires relief fund, along with other contributions from the PGA Tour and \$125,000 from the International team at the Presidents Cup.

It was personal for Smith. His uncle lives in New South Wales and lost everything but a shed.

"We're a tight-knit family and it hit everyone pretty hard," he said. "It's good to do something good, and hopefully puts a smile on their face." □

Associated Press

3-and-out: PGA Tour moving Byron Nelson from Trinity Forest

DALLAS (AP) — The PGA Tour will move the Byron Nelson away from Trinity Forest Golf Club after the tournament is played there for only the third time this May.

The links-style course south of downtown Dallas was built in 2014 on the site of a former landfill. The Nelson moved there in 2018 after 35 years at the TPC Four Seasons in suburban Irving, Texas, about 25 miles away. The PGA Tour hasn't said where the Nelson will be played after this year's tournament.

Disappointing attendance at Trinity Forest and decreased revenues for charity were significant factors in the decision. The course has an unusual look for a PGA Tour venue because it has no trees. Trinity Forest officials said in a release that PGA Tour officials cited weather issues during the first two years that exposed deficiencies with tournament infrastructure, and that it was determined by the course and the Salesmanship Club of Dallas, which

hosts the event, that those issues couldn't be remedied easily. The start of the third round in last year's tournament was delayed six hours by heavy rains and play was suspended by darkness, leading to 27 holes on the final day for the leaders. There were also weather issues in 2018, when the final round had a four-hour rain delay and it was nearly dark for the final putt of the tournament. The Salesmanship Club's Momentous Institute, a nonprofit that provides education and therapeutic services for about 5,500 children and family members each year, benefits from the Nelson's net proceeds. After peaking at more than \$6 million a year when at Four Seasons, last year's tournament netted less than half of that. Three-time major champion Jordan Spieth, who played his first PGA Tour event as a 16-year-old at Four Seasons, is a member of Trinity Forest. So is CBS NFL broadcaster and former Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo. □

Packers hold off Seahawks 28-23 to reach NFC title game

By **DAVE CAMPBELL**

AP Pro Football Writer

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP) —

Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers have relied more on character and resilience than offense or defense this season, lagging well behind past editions in aesthetics.

This divisional round win over Seattle, though, was a vintage Rodgers performance. He helped the Packers pull within a game of the Super Bowl with an array of clutch completions at the most critical of moments. Rodgers connected with Davante Adams eight times for 160 yards and two touchdowns, Green Bay's spruced-up defense fended off a spirited Seahawks rally, and the Packers held on for a 28-23 victory Sunday night to reach the NFC championship game for the third time in six years.

"It's one of those feelings that starts to creep up in warmups, when you really feel like you're locked in," Rodgers said, "and I was glad it translated to the field." Aaron Jones rushed for 62 yards and two first-half scores for the Packers (14-3), who will travel next weekend to take on top-seeded San Francisco. Rodgers, who went 16 for 27 for 243 yards in his 17th career postseason start, Rodgers has 38 touchdown passes in the playoffs. That's good for fifth in league history.

"He's definitely hungry for another Super Bowl. He deserves it, so we're doing everything in our power to put him in that position," said Adams, who set Green Bay's postseason record for receiving yards.

Russell Wilson carried the Seahawks (12-6) on yet another comeback, this time from a 21-3 halftime deficit, but the Packers forced a punt shortly before the two-minute warning on the second sack of the game by Preston Smith. That was Green Bay's fifth of the game. "Five minutes left, we're getting the ball back, the thing's going to be over. We're going to win it," Wilson said. "I think everybody in the stadium, and I think everybody



Green Bay Packers' Preston Smith sacks Seattle Seahawks' Russell Wilson during the second half of an NFL divisional playoff football game Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020, in Green Bay, Wis.

Associated Press

watching felt like that, too." The Seahawks never got the ball again.

Rodgers sealed the win with two third-down throws: a 32-yard strike to Adams on third-and-8 with 2:19 left and then for 9 yards to Jimmy Graham on third-and-9 right after the two-minute warning to take down a Seahawks team that was 8-1 on the road this season entering the game.

"I'm just going to enjoy a nice glass of scotch tonight," Rodgers said, "and get on to the film of San Fran and get ready for a tough opponent."

Rodgers exacted some payback for five years ago, when the Packers blew a 16-0 halftime lead in the NFC championship game at Seattle and were beaten 28-22 in overtime. The Seahawks lost their next game to New England when Wilson was infamously intercepted late at the goal line and haven't been back to the conference title game since then.

Rodgers is running out of time faster than Wilson, though, nine years after his only championship. Though many of Green Bay's performances haven't been pretty, with so many hold-on-at-the-end wins, Rodgers and Matt LaFleur have sure meshed well in the coach's rookie season.

"Let's be honest, I don't know that even our fans felt

supremely confident in us," Rodgers said. The Seahawks had just a plus-seven scoring margin during the regular season, making quite the habit of second-half rallies. Wilson did some of the finest work of his eight-year career in 2019, helping the Seahawks stay on track despite a steady stream of injuries, including the late setbacks in the backfield that prompted the emergency call for Marshawn Lynch. Racking up 64 yards rushing on seven scrambles and completing 21 of 31 passes for 277 yards, Wilson directed touchdown drives of 69, 84, 79 right out of the gate after halftime. Lynch finished two of them with scores, and Wilson threw on the run to Tyler Lockett, who had 136 yards on nine receptions, for the other one. "Every time I looked up, he was making somebody miss in the pocket, creating and extending plays," LaFleur said. "That's what he's done his whole career." Lynch's second touchdown with 9:33 left cut the lead to 28-23, but Jaire Alexander blew up the 2-point conversion attempt with a sack on an unblocked blitz. The Packers gave the ball back to the Seahawks with a second consecutive punt, this time with 4:54 left at the Seattle 22, but Wilson ran out of tricks in his seemingly bottomless bag of them.

"He tested our cardio and heart and endurance today," Smith said.

Lynch, who has 12 rushing touchdowns in 13 career postseason games to tie for fourth in NFL history, had only 26 yards on 12 carries. "We made it exciting," Wilson said. "We just wish we would have left here with a win."

STRONG START

The Seahawks brought their pass rush to life with seven sacks while grinding out a 17-9 win at Philadelphia last week in the wild card round, with Jadeveon Clowney making his presence felt including a hit that knocked Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz out of the game with a concussion. The Packers mostly kept Rodgers much better protected, though, and a Seahawks defense that forced 32 turnovers in the first 14 games played a fourth straight time without a takeaway. The Packers had three touchdown drives of 75 yards apiece over the first three quarters, plus a 60-yard march preceded by a missed 50-yard field goal try from Jason Myers. Rodgers hasn't had much help beyond Adams and Jones this season, but he and LaFleur did a masterful job of getting them the ball with some Graham mixed in. On the opening possession, Adams and Geronimo Allison ran angled routes toward each

other before faking the pick and zagging away. Seahawks cornerback Tre Flowers was caught in the confusion, allowing Adams to break free for the 20-yard score.

OH, NO, LAMBEAU

Seahawks fans have plenty of bad memories of their favorite team's performances in Green Bay, with the losing streak at Lambeau Field now at nine straight games. The last such win for Seattle was on Nov. 1, 1999. There was the hot mike that picked up Matt Hasselbeck's ill-fated boast during the overtime coin toss that the Seahawks would win, preceding his pick-six in the 2003 playoffs. There was the blowout in the snow in the 2007 playoffs, which turned out to be Brett Favre's final win for the Packers. There were also the regular season losses with Wilson in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

INJURY REPORT

Seahawks: LG Mike Iupati was out with a neck injury, and Jamarco Jones left in the second quarter with a concussion. That forced rookie Phil Haynes into action. ... Clowney, who has fought through a core muscle injury this season, was holding his midsection in the second quarter and briefly absent for the first TD run by Jones. Packers: RT Bryan Bulaga, one of six players the team reported this week as being limited by illness, was active for but did not play. Jared Veldheer replaced him.

UP NEXT

Seahawks: head into the offseason, needing replenish their depth on the offensive line and on defense while Wilson remains in his prime. Packers: advance to their third NFC championship game in six years. They lost 37-8 on Nov. 24 to the 49ers, who beat Minnesota 27-10 on Saturday in their divisional round game. All four of Green Bay's appearances in the NFC title game with Rodgers at the helm have been on the road. They won at Chicago after the 2010 season to reach his only Super Bowl. □

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Devils fire GM, end Lightning's 10-game winning streak

By The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Louis Domingue stopped 26 shots against his former team and the New Jersey Devils beat Tampa Bay 3-1 on Sunday night, ending the Lightning's franchise record-tying 10-game winning streak. Travis Zajac, Andy Greene and Miles Wood scored for the disappointing Devils, who fired general manager Ray Shero less than two hours before the start of the game. New Jersey made the playoffs once in his four-plus year tenure. Tyler Johnson scored for the Lightning, who tied their consecutive wins record on Saturday with a 1-0 win over Philadelphia. Curtis McElhinney made 17 saves in getting the start in place of Andrei Vasilevskiy, who had shut-outs in the last two games. The 10-game winning streak tied the New York Islanders for the longest this season.

PREDATORS 1, JETS 0

WINNIPEG, Manitoba (AP)



New Jersey Devils goaltender Louis Domingue makes a save against the Tampa Bay Lightning during the first period of an NHL hockey game Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020, in Newark, N.J.

Associated Press

— Juuse Saros made 28 saves for his first shutout of the season, Kyle Turris scored in the first period and Nashville beat Winnipeg. Predators captain Roman Josi had his points streak end at 12 games. He had 20 points (seven goals and 13 assists) during the career-high run and franchise record for defensemen. It was the NHL's longest active streak. Connor Hellebuyck stopped 31

shots for Winnipeg. **PENGUINS 4, COYOTES 3, SO** GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Teddy Blueger scored the deciding goal in the eighth round of the shootout to lift Pittsburgh past Arizona. Jared McCann, Patric Hornqvist and Brandon Tanev scored in regulation to help the Penguins sweep a three-game Western trip. Tristan Jarry had 25 saves. Taylor Hall had a goal and

an assist for Arizona. Conor Garland and Derek Stepan also scored, and Adin Hill made 30 saves.

PANTHERS 8, MAPLE LEAFS 4

SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — Jonathan Huberdeau had a goal and an assist, surpassing Olli Jokinen for Florida's career points lead with 420, and the Panthers beat Toronto. Mike Hoffman scored twice, and Aleksander Barkov and Vincent Trocheck each had a goal and two assists. Frank Vatrano, Mike Matheson and Josh Brown also scored in the Panthers' highest-scoring game of the season. Chris Driedger made 43 saves. Mitch Marner scored twice for the Maple Leafs, and Zach Hyman had a goal and two assists. John Tavares also scored. Toronto goaltender Frederik Andersen allowed four goals on 12 shots before he was pulled 49 seconds into the second period. Michael Hutchinson stopped 13 shots.

CANUCKS 4, WILD 1

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Elias Pettersson scored his 21st goal and fellow All-Star Jacob Markstrom stopped 23 shots in Vancouver's victory over Minnesota.

Bo Horvat added two goals — the second into an empty net with 5.7 seconds left — and Troy Stecher also scored for the Canucks. They've won nine of 11 and picked up their second win in two days. Devan Dubnyk made 26 saves, and Marcus Foligno scored for Minnesota.

SABRES 5, RED WINGS 1

DETROIT (AP) — Evan Rodrigues scored twice in the first five minutes and Buffalo cruised past NHL-worst Detroit. Rodrigues entered with no goals in 25 games this season. Zemgus Girgensons also scored in the first period for the Sabres, Zach Bogosian and Rasmus Ristolainen added goals, and Linus Ullmark made 21 saves.

Madison Bowey scored for Detroit. □

Kyrie Irving returns to help Nets rout Hawks

By The Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Kyrie Irving scored 21 points in 20 minutes of an easy return from a two-month absence with an injured right shoulder, leading the Brooklyn Nets to a 108-86 victory over the Atlanta Hawks on Sunday. Irving shot 10 for 11 from the field after missing 26 games with an impingement. The shoulder looked fine and his handle looked as good as ever while he dribbled his way around a hopeless Atlanta defense. Energized by his return that still seemed a ways away just a week ago, the Nets led by 39 points and won their second straight after dropping seven in a row. Cam Reddish scored 20 points for the Hawks. They played without star guard Trae Young because of a left hamstring injury and lost their fourth straight.

JAZZ 127, WIZARDS 116
WASHINGTON (AP) — Bojan Bogdanovic scored 31 points, Rudy Gobert added 21 points and 14 rebounds and Utah beat Washington for its ninth straight victory. Utah overcame a 15-point deficit in the third quarter to win for the 14th time in 15 games. Jordan Clarkson had 17 of his 23 points in the second half. Utah scoring leader Donovan Mitchell sat out because of an illness.

Bradley Beal scored 25 points for Washington after missing five games with right leg soreness.

SPURS 105, RAPTORS 104
TORONTO (AP) — DeMar DeRozan scored 25 points, Rudy Gay had 15 and San Antonio overcame an 18-point deficit to beat Toronto.

San Antonio used a big fourth quarter to win for the third time in four games. Derrick White scored 13 points for the Spurs, and LaMarcus Aldridge had 11. DeRozan also had eight rebounds and four assists against his former team. Serge Ibaka had 21 points and a season-high 15 rebounds for Toronto. Kyle Lowry had 16 points and a season-high 15 assists.

NUGGETS 114, CLIPPERS 104
DENVER (AP) — Nikola Jokic had 20 points and 15 rebounds and Denver withstood a big rally to beat Los Angeles. Trailing by as many 20 points in the second half, Los Angeles had pulled within six with 1:11 remaining when Patrick Beverley was called for a foul on Jokic. Clippers coach Doc Rivers was incensed over the call and was given two technical fouls and ejected from the game. Kawhi Leonard scored 30 points for Los Angeles. Clippers star forward Paul George missed his second straight game because of



Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving (11) brings the ball down court against Atlanta Hawks forward John Collins (20) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020, in New York. The Nets defeated the Hawks 108-86.

Associated Press

a strained left hamstring.
SUNS 100, HORNETS 92
PHOENIX (AP) — Kelly Oubre Jr had 25 points and 15 rebounds in Phoenix's victory over Charlotte. Oubre scored 15 points in the second half on a night when Suns star guard Devin Booker struggled from the floor, shooting 3 of 12. He had 12 points and nine assists. Deandre Ayton added 18 points and nine rebounds for Phoenix. Dwayne Bacon scored 24 points for the Hornets.

GRIZZLIES 122, WARRIORS 102
MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Jonas Valanciunas had 31 points and a season-high 19 rebounds and Memphis handed Golden State its eighth straight loss. Valanciunas was 13 of 17 from the field, including a 3-pointer to help the Grizzlies win their fifth straight. Jaren Jackson Jr. finished with 21 points, and Ja Morant had 11 points and 10 assists. D'Angelo Russell led the Warriors with 34 points in his

return from a right shoulder injury.
KNICKS 124, HEAT 121
NEW YORK (AP) — Julius Randle scored 26 points, RJ Barrett chipped in 23 and New York rallied to beat Miami. Kevin Knox had 17 points off the bench and Reggie Bullock added 16 to help the Knicks snap a five-game losing streak. Jimmy Butler had 25 points and 10 rebounds for the Heat. They blew a lead down the stretch for the second time. □

Dakar minus grieving motorbike riders gives drivers problems

WADI AL-DAWASIR, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Carlos Sainz stayed in front at the Dakar Rally as the leading drivers struggled with navigation on Monday in the absence of the motorbike riders who cancelled their stage in homage to Paulo Goncalves.

Goncalves died on Sunday after crashing in the Saudi Arabia desert. The popular Portuguese was competing in his 13th Dakar. The motorbike and quad racers decided to cancel their stage. The cars raced on, and Sainz opened the way



Driver Stephane Peterhansel, of France, and co-driver Paulo Fiuza, of Portugal, race their Mini during stage eight of the Dakar Rally in Wadi Al Dawasir, Saudi Arabia, Monday, Jan. 13, 2020.

Associated Press

cautiously without the benefit of motorbike tracks to judge the 477-kilometer loop around Wadi Al-Dawasir. Sainz gradually

fell off the pace, and lost time to title rivals Nasser Al-Attiyah and Stephane Peterhansel. But the Spaniard stayed in their dust

trails and saw his lead over defending champion Al-Attiyah cut by more than three minutes to less than seven, and his 19-minute lead over 13-time winner Peterhansel down to 13. There are four stages to go. "It's the first time we've driven without the bikes' tracks and ... the navigation is complicated when you have to follow a course in the dunes, there is always a tendency to deviate," Peterhansel said. "On the hardest part, Nasser was out in front and we followed him. It's impossible to go fast opening

the way. The bikers give us a lot of help with the navigation." The eighth stage was a first-time win for French driver Mathieu Serradori, who became the first amateur to take a stage in 32 years. Serradori manages a company that specializes in electricity. He rose to the occasion through the valleys and canyons in the last half of the stage. Former Formula One champion Fernando Alonso achieved his best stage finish, second despite a puncture, and Orlando Terranova was third. □

Fury predicts early KO of Wilder in heavyweight rematch

By **GREG BEACHAM**

AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Tyson Fury leaned into the microphone and issued an audacious prediction to Deontay Wilder regarding their heavyweight rematch.

"You're going to sleep in two rounds," the English champion said Monday.

Wilder replied by picking up his own microphone and loudly sniffing it, mocking Fury for his past problems with drug abuse.

When these two unbeaten heavyweights got together in downtown Los Angeles on Monday, they picked up right where they left off across the street in December 2018.

Their thrilling split draw at Staples Center has led to a rematch Feb. 22 in Las Vegas, and both men claim they expect a knockout victory in what's likely to be the most-anticipated heavyweight title fight in recent years.

Although both fighters are skilled in the craft of promotional hyperbole, it was still a surprise when Fury (29-0-1, 20 KOs) declared he can knock out Wilder within the first six minutes at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.

A knockout prediction is no surprise at all coming from Wilder (42-0-1, 41 KOs), whose peerless punching power dropped Fury twice in their first bout. The fight's most memorable moment



Tyson Fury, of England, hits Tom Schwarz, of Germany, during a heavyweight boxing match Saturday, June 15, 2019, in Las Vegas.

was Fury's stunning rise from a 12th-round knockdown that had left him flat on his back.

"I'm prepared for more than ever," Wilder said. "I told Fury two years ago I was going to baptize him, and I did just that. Rising up is part of the baptism. I told him he was going to go, 'Timber!' And he did just that. This time around, it's called unfinished business. He won't be able to get back up. This time, I'm going to knock him out."

Aside from the fighters' charismatic personalities and their penchants for wild public statements,

this matchup is fascinating because it pits Fury's boxing skills — which are impressive for any fighter, let alone a hulking heavyweight — against Wilder's ferocious punching power, which is likely unmatched in the sport.

Fury nearly won the first bout with his impressive movement and activity, but Wilder's strength proved to be an equalizer. Fury would have claimed a decision on the scorecards if he hadn't been knocked down twice, yet Fury insists he must win by knockout to get a decision in the U.S.

He even changed trainers

and hired a nutritionist with a knockout in mind, moving from trainer Ben Davison to Javan Hill, a nephew and disciple of the late Emmanuel Steward.

"I can't win a decision here, and I accept that," said Fury, who won a decision in Las Vegas four months ago. "I'm going for a knockout because thinking I won the fight ain't enough. I need to know. Thinking it doesn't count. I need to end the fight."

Fury believes he hurt Wilder several times in their first bout, but said he "just didn't have the gas" that would have been necessary for

Associated Press

a knockout. He believes he can find that extra reservoir of strength this time, even if he has to abandon the boxing skills that served him well for most of the first fight.

Wilder is aiming for a knockout, but he also believes he can win a decision. He also feels the first fight should have been stopped due to a deep cut on Fury's face. In fact, Wilder thinks he would have won the first fight on the scorecards if he hadn't given away a few early rounds by coming out "overexcited and anxious."

"But when you have devastating power like I do, you don't worry about rounds," Wilder said. "He's got to survive 12 rounds with me."

Wilder also suggested Fury's bravado masks the British boxer's worries about his chin and his American opponent's ferocity. Wilder points to Fury's less-than-impressive effort against Sweden's Otto Wallin in September as a sign of his decline.

"When you get knocked down like that, and you don't know how you got on the ground, let alone how you got up, it's scary," Wilder said of his 12th-round knockdown of Fury. "It's not only scary for you. It's scary for your friends, your family, because they know you're going in there with that monster." □

AP Source: NHL All-Star game to feature women 3-on-3 event

By **JOHN WAWROW** AP Hockey Writer

The NHL is increasing its promotion of women's hockey by adding a three-on-three game between U.S. and Canadian national team members to its All-Star festivities later this month in St. Louis. The women's game will happen during the Jan. 24-25 weekend that showcases the top players in the NHL, according to three people with direct knowledge of the plans who discussed them Monday with The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the NHL isn't set to reveal its plans until later this week. The plan to hold

the three-on-three game has been in the works for months, with as many as 24 players set to participate after the final rosters were being established late last week, two of the people told AP. The game was first reported by ESPN.com.

This isn't the first time the NHL has invited female players to attend its All-Star game.

Two years ago, with Team USA training nearby in advance of the Winter Olympics, the NHL invited three American players to be on hand but not participate. Last year, four players were invited and American Kendall Coyne Schofield made

a huge splash by becoming the first woman to participate in the skills event and then finished seventh in the fastest skater competition.

What's difficult to gauge is what signal the NHL might be sending by having a number of the world's top female players sharing the spotlight when women's hockey is in a state of flux.

The uncertainty arose in late March, when the six-team Canadian Women's Hockey League announced it was folding due to financial reasons after 12 seasons, leaving the U.S.-based five-team National Women's Hockey League

as North America's lone professional league.

A majority of players, however, balked at making the jump to the NWHL and instead vowed to not play professionally in North America this season. Eventually, nearly 200 top players formed the Professional Women's Hockey Players' Association to push for a league they say must have a sustainable economic model. The PWHPA has since launched a series of barnstorming tours, with its most recent stop in Toronto this past weekend. The NWHL, in the meantime, is in the middle of its fifth season and featuring teams

made up of patchwork rosters with a handful of association players having returned to play.

The NHL has avoided the appearance of playing favorites, first between the CWHL and NWHL, by providing each league \$75,000 annually (the NWHL received the CWHL's share once the Canadian league folded).

Commissioner Gary Bettman has supported the idea of the NHL forming its own league, but not at the expense of pushing an existing league out of business. Bettman has said he doesn't want the NHL to appear like a bully. □

Sign Stealing

Continued from Page 17

Players banged on a trash can to signal to batters what was coming, believing it would improve the batter's odds of getting a hit.

Sign stealing is a legal and time-honored part of baseball as long as it is done with the naked eye — say, by a baserunner standing on second. Using technology is prohibited.

Astros players disputed whether knowing the pitches seconds in advance helped batters. Houston had fewer wins at home than on the road, winning 94 home games and 110 on the road during the two seasons. There was no sign-stealing system on the road.

"While it is impossible to determine whether the conduct actually impacted the results on the field, the perception of some that it did causes significant harm to the game," Manfred said.

Manfred, in his most significant action since becoming commissioner five years ago, said Hinch failed to stop the sign stealing and Luhnow was responsible for the players' conduct even though he made the dubious claim he was not aware. Manfred said owner Jim Crane was not informed.

An hour after MLB announced its punishment, Crane opened a news conference by saying Hinch and Luhnow were fired.

"I have higher standards for the city and the franchise, and I'm going above and beyond MLB's penalty," he said. "We need to move forward with a clean slate." Both Luhnow's and Hinch's suspensions for the 2020 season were to be without pay. Crane said he will look outside the organization and internally for candidates to replace Luhnow. If he hires internally, the most likely candidate would be Pete Putila, who was promoted to assistant general manager this offseason.

Crane, who said he learned of the discipline this weekend, was visibly upset dur-

ing Monday's news conference and insisted that Houston's championship, which culminated in a seven-game World Series over the Los Angeles Dodgers, was not tainted.

"We want to be known as playing by the rules," he said. "We broke the rules. We accept the punishment and we're going to move forward ... if you read the report neither (Luhnow or Hinch) implemented this or pushed it through the system and (it) really came from the bottom up."

Hinch's penalty was among the longest for an MLB manager. Brooklyn's Leo Durocher was suspended for one year by Commissioner Happy Chandler in April 1947 for the "accumulation of unpleasant incidents" detrimental to baseball, and Cincinnati's Pete Rose was banned for life by Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti in August 1989 for betting on Reds' games while managing the team. Houston was a big league-best 204-120 during the two years in question, winning its first title. Hinch, a 45-year-old former catcher with a degree from Stanford, was the most successful manager in the history of the Astros, who have won two of the last three AL pennants and came within one victory of another World Series title last year against Washington. Luhnow, 53, earned an MBA at Northwestern and fostered an analytic-based culture during eight seasons as Astros GM, but also a toxic one with high turnover.

"It is very clear to me that the culture of the baseball operations department, manifesting itself in the way its employees are treated, its relations with other clubs, and its relations with the media and external stakeholders, has been very problematic," Manfred wrote in a nine-page statement. "At least in my view, the baseball operations department's insular culture -- one that valued and rewarded results over other considerations, combined with a staff of individuals who often lacked direction



In this Sept. 29, 2014, file photo, Houston Astros general manager Jeff Luhnow, right, and A.J. Hinch pose after Hinch is introduced as the new manager of the baseball club in Houston.

Associated Press

or sufficient oversight, led ... finally, to an environment that allowed the conduct described in this report to have occurred."

Crane, who hired Luhnow weeks after buying the Astros, denied a widespread problem, saying "I think there was some isolated situations."

Luhnow said in a statement that he accepts responsibility "for rules violations that occurred on my watch as president of baseball operations and general manager of the Astros" and apologized to the team and fans for "the shame and embarrassment this has caused." Then Luhnow defended himself.

"I am not a cheater," the statement said. "Anybody who has worked closely with me during my 32-year career inside and outside baseball can attest to my integrity. I did not know rules were being broken. As the commissioner set out in his statement, I did not personally direct, oversee or engage in any misconduct: The sign-stealing initiative was not planned or directed by baseball management; the trash-can banging was driven and executed by players, and the video decoding of signs originated and was executed by lower-level employees working with the bench coach. I am deeply upset that I wasn't informed of any misconduct because I would have stopped it."

Hinch issued a statement through the Astros, saying he was "disappointed in our club's actions within this timeline, and I accept the Commissioner's decision."

"As a leader and major league manager, it is my responsibility to lead players and staff with integrity that represents the game in the best possible way," the statement said. "While the evidence consistently showed I didn't endorse or participate in the sign-stealing practices, I failed to stop them and I am deeply sorry." "As the person with responsibility for managing his players and coaches, there simply is no justification for Hinch's failure to act," Manfred said. The GM told Major League Baseball he was unaware of the system, but Manfred held him accountable for the team's actions.

"Although Luhnow denies having any awareness that his replay review room staff was decoding and transmitting signs, there is both documentary and testimonial evidence that indicates Luhnow had some knowledge of those efforts," Manfred's report said. Baseball's response was far greater than that of the NFL to a similar infraction. New England coach Bill Belichick was fined \$500,000 in 2007 and the Patriots were penalized \$250,000 for using video to capture an opponent's signals. The Patriots also were stripped of a first-round draft choice for

punishment in the scandal known as "Spygate." They were penalized again for \$1 million eight years later for deflating footballs used in the AFC championship game. The NFL took away a first-round draft pick and suspended quarterback Tom Brady for four games. Current New York Mets manager Carlos Beltrán, then a player with the Astros, was among the group involved. Manfred said no Astros players will be disciplined because he decided in September 2017 to hold a team's manager and GM responsible for sign-stealing infractions. "Virtually all of the Astros' players had some involvement or knowledge of the scheme, and I am not in a position based on the investigative record to determine with any degree of certainty every player who should be held accountable."

Baseball's investigation began when former Astros pitcher Mike Fiers, now with Oakland, made the allegations in a report by The Athletic on Nov. 12.

Sign stealing has a long history in baseball — the New York Giants used a military field scope and buzzer during their 1951 tiebreaker playoff against the Brooklyn Dodgers. While decoding with the naked eye is allowed, MLB has enacted increasingly stringent prohibitions in recent years against the use of electronics to spy on opponents. □

Privacy, once hidden topic, gets attention at CES tech show

By **RACHEL LERMAN** and **JOSEPH PISANI**
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Once a hidden and under-the-radar topic, privacy got more attention at the CES gadget show in Las Vegas this week. Startups now volunteer information about how they're securing your data and protecting your privacy when you use their heart rate monitor or cuddly robot.

Roybi, an alien-looking robot that teaches kids languages and other skills, has a camera with facial recognition that can remember children and guess whether the kid was excited or sad after a lesson. Roybi says it uses that information to make changes to its lessons.

But the \$199 robot also comes with a sticker, so parents can block the camera if they want.

"We want to make sure we give people choices," said CEO and founder Elnaz Sarraf, who said parents questioned the lens. "When it comes to children, people are more sensitive."

Caregiver Smart Solutions, which makes products for caregivers to track the elderly remotely, decided to do away with cameras, declaring them too intrusive. The company opted instead for small sensors that monitor when doors are opened and closed.

After two years of tech companies facing the reckoning of rising privacy concerns, the message seems to be setting in: The way you use customers' information can no longer be



Samsung Sero TVs are on display at the Samsung booth during the CES tech show, Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2020, in Las Vegas. The TVs can rotate to play vertically or horizontally.

ignored.

Friday was the final day of the annual CES technology conference in Las Vegas, a forum for companies to unveil their products and services for the coming year. Among other highlights this week:

A SCREEN THAT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

Airport screens are a jumble of flight numbers, times and gates. Delta wants to change that.

The airline will soon start testing an airport screen that will show personalized flight information only to you.

The twist: nearly 100 people will be able to look at the same screen simultaneously and see just their own information. No special glasses needed, just the naked eye.

It's a technology that could change the way people

get from airport security to their planes. The hope is that similar screens will fill the halls of airports, pointing people to where they need to walk or where they can stop to get a bite to eat.

Delta is teaming with startup Misapplied Sciences for the technology. Misapplied CEO Albert Ng said normal TVs send the same colored light in all directions. His company's screens control which colors are emitted to different people. Cameras above figure out where each person is standing and send the right combination of lights in that direction.

Delta will test the screen later this year at Detroit's airport. The company said the screens won't be used for targeted advertising.

Frank Gillett, a technology analyst at Forrester, said

the technology may be too expensive right now to expand to every airport. But he said Delta's plans to make the airport experience easier for travelers could hook more customers to the airline.

HUMANOID CHATBOT

Meet your new artificial friend, called Neon.

For weeks leading up to CES, Samsung has teased Neon as the next big thing in artificial intelligence. What is being shown is essentially a humanoid chatbot with AI.

Neon is an independent company backed by Samsung's advanced research lab.

Ask the Neon a question, and it will respond. It won't know all the answers, the way the Google Assistant or Amazon's Alexa is supposed to. In that sense, it's intended to be more

like a human — with some knowledge and an ability to learn.

The vision is a future where Neons are so human-like that humans start interacting with them just like any other person.

Neon CEO Pranav Mistry says that it will let humans have real human connections with the machines, instead of just yelling orders like "stop" and "open."

But that's some time away. Neon is still in an early stage of development.

OOOPS

Things don't always go as planned.

Samsung's new Sero TV can pivot between horizontal and vertical orientations, but just getting it to work onstage was a challenge at the company's CES event earlier in the week.

Product training manager Scott Cohen was unable to connect his smartphone to the TV set and eventually chose to carry on the stage demonstration regardless.

"Since we cannot get it to work, I will explain all the things we can do," he said. "We're not sure if the Wi-Fi in here with everyone on is doing it."

Samsung later blamed unreliable Wi-Fi that prevented the smartphone from connecting.

The Sero — which means "vertical" in Korean — is intended to let viewers watch social media, YouTube and personal videos in their true orientation, without black bars at the side. When viewing vertical video, for instance, the TV physically rotates to that position. □

Associated Press



In this Jan. 11, 2010 file photo, a display for Microsoft's Windows 7 is shown at the National Retail Federation's convention in New York.

Associated Press

Microsoft ends free Windows 7 security updates on Tuesday

NEW YORK (AP) — If you're still using Microsoft's Windows 7, your computer might soon be at risk.

Microsoft will stop providing free security updates for the system on Tuesday, meaning computers using it will be more vulnerable to malware and hacking.

Users who want to protect their computers need to

upgrade to Windows 10. They may also need to buy new computers because older machines might not be compatible with Windows 10.

Tech companies typically phase out older systems after a number of years and focus efforts on updating current versions of software. Windows 7 came

out in 2009. Windows 8, which came out in 2012, will have free support end in 2023.

Those who run Windows 7 Professional or Windows 7 Enterprise can buy extended protection for up to three years. But it might be worthwhile to just to buy new PCs or get Windows 10. □

Startups see a market in renting couches by the month

By **JOSEPH PISANI**

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Zachariah Mohammed's living room is filled with stuff he doesn't own.

He pays \$200 a month for the sofa, side table, bar cart, dining table and four chairs in his living room. It's worth it, the 27-year-old New Yorker says. If he needs to move, which he's done twice in the last 12 months, he won't need to lug a sofa across the city or worry if it will fit in a new place. The furniture-rental startup, Feather, will swap out items for something else.

Feather, Fernish and other companies aim to rent furniture to millennials who don't want to commit to big purchases or move heavy furniture and are willing to pay for the convenience. It's part of a wave of rental culture that includes Rent the Runway, focused on women's designer clothing, and even Netflix and Spotify, which let you stream from a huge catalog rather than buy individual TV show episodes, movies or songs.

"They're moving a lot. They're changing jobs a lot," says Thomas Robertson, a marketing professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, describing the types of people who would use the services. "Why would you want to be saddled with furniture?"

The furniture-rental companies target high-income city dwellers who want a \$1,100 orange love seat (\$46 a month) or \$980 leather bench (\$41 a month) — but only temporarily. The furniture itself is a step up from Ikea.

"I'm 32 years old and have lived in 25 different places, five different countries, 12 different cities," says Chan Park, who co-founded online furniture rental company Oliver Space last year. He constantly bought and discarded cheap furniture. Then he moved to a furnished rental apartment in Singapore.

"It was probably the first time my adult life that I felt



In this Monday, Nov. 25, 2019 photo, Zachariah Mohammed, left, Pete Mancilla, and their dog Remy pose for a picture in their apartment in New York.

like I was truly at home," Park says.

These startups are in just a handful of coastal cities, with few users, but seek to grow. They offer furniture from Crate & Barrel, West Elm and smaller brands.

Others are renting out home goods, too. Rent the Runway recently added West Elm pillows and quilts. Ikea is testing a rental service in several countries outside the U.S., including Switzerland and Belgium.

Renting may make sense for a generation that sees "life as transient," says Hana Ben-Shabat, the founder of Gen Z Planet, a research and advisory firm that focuses on the generation born between the late

1990s and 2016. Young people today get married and buy homes later than they used to, and young people move more than older people do. Still, millennials are moving less than previous generations did at their age, and Americans overall are moving less.

Moving her furniture from New York to Los Angeles would have cost Clarissa Wright \$3,000. Instead, she gave away most of what she owned, traveled in Europe for two months and then rented a couch, bed, mattress, bar stools and other furniture in her new place, for \$255 a month. Feather delivered and assembled everything in one day.

Wright, a 28-year-old marketing consulting for fashion and beauty brands, says she can switch out the furniture, add more stuff, move to a new apartment or city. But right now, she doesn't know what the future holds. □

Associated Press

Visa buys financial technology company Plaid for \$5.3B

By **KEN SWEET**

NEW YORK (AP) — Visa is purchasing the financial technology company Plaid for \$5.3 billion, a major push by the payment processing giant into other types of money transfer systems outside of Visa's traditional credit and debit card business.

Plaid allows consumers to

link their bank accounts to financial services apps like Venmo, PayPal, Betterment and Transferwise. The company is an important but unknown middle man between the banks, who hold consumers's cash, and the dozens of platforms who vie to be the platform of choice to send that cash.

Bankers refer to companies like Plaid as "the plumbing" behind how these apps work.

This "plumbing" has become more important as more Americans use mobile wallets or send money to friends, families and businesses.

Visa estimates that 1 in every 4 Americans who have a bank account have used the underlying technolo-

gies of Plaid to link their bank accounts with other money transfer apps.

The Monday announcement is Visa's first big push into a product that isn't just credit and debits cards. Visa is the world's largest payment processing company, but it makes almost entirely all of its money from swipe fees it earns from merchants whenever its cards are accepted. □

CENTURY 21 Aruba Real Estate **RESIDENTIAL**

FOR SALE

Rooi Santo 138

US\$ 529.000
Afl 941.620

(+297) 5 86 42 42
We are located at Palm Beach 4-G

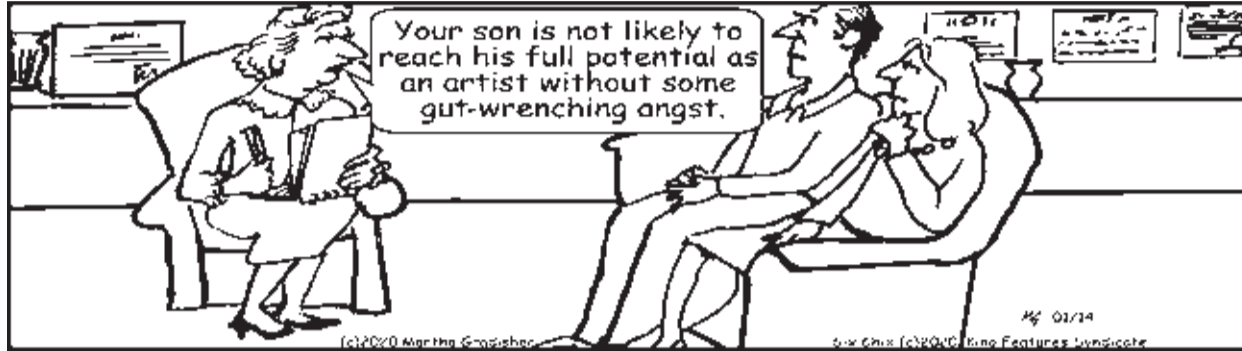
This spacious, well designed, stunning and luxurious 3 bedroom / 2 bathroom property, is located in the luxurious residential area, called Prima Vista - Rooi Santo, in North. This area is located within a 3 minute drive to Palm Beach and the Tierra del Sol Golf course.

For more listings visit www.arubahouses.com

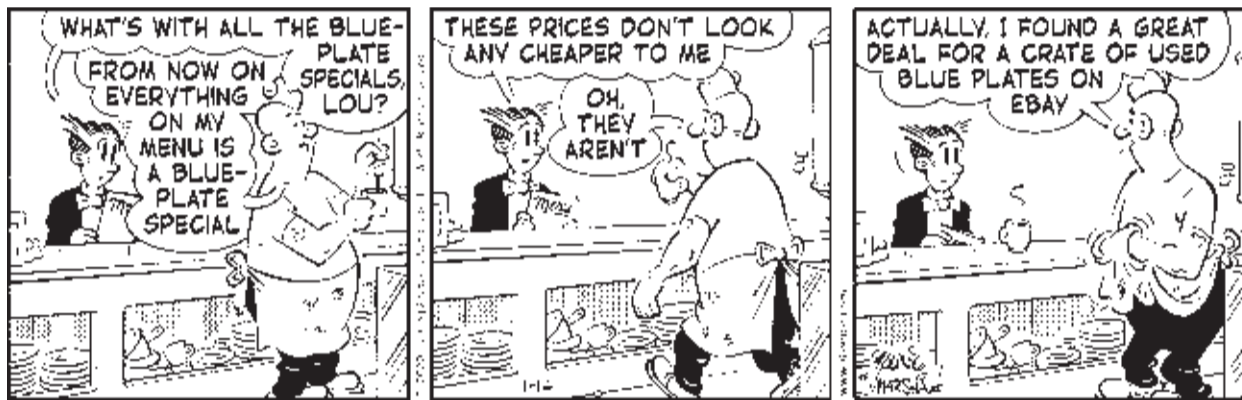
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



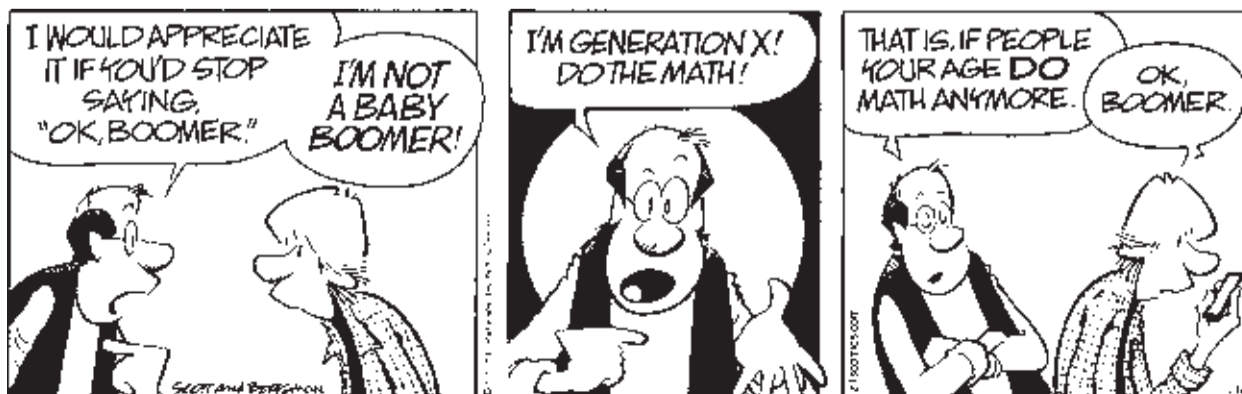
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		2			1			
		3	6		8			
6					9			7
2	8			3	6	4	1	
		1		7				
	5	6	4	8			3	9
7		5					8	
		8		1	2			
	1			4				

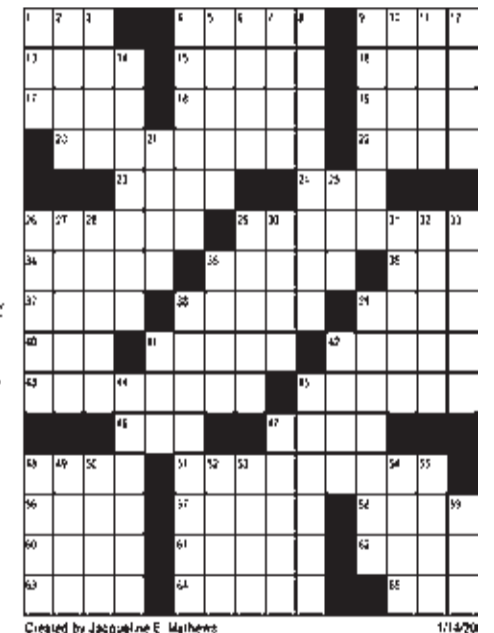
Difficulty Level ★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	9	8	3	1	6	5	7	2
7	1	6	5	2	4	8	3	9
3	2	5	8	7	9	4	6	1
1	6	7	2	3	5	9	8	4
9	4	2	6	8	1	7	5	3
8	5	3	4	9	7	2	1	6
5	7	1	9	6	2	3	4	8
6	3	9	7	4	8	1	2	5
2	8	4	1	5	3	6	9	7

- ACROSS**
- 1 Cleaning cord
 - 4 Sends a parcel
 - 9 War who lives in an abbey
 - 13 Love, in Medic
 - 15 Have you cake and too
 - 15 in Love with Amy
 - 17 Wakening
 - 18 Six raise piece
 - 19 unceasingment
 - 20 Outlaw of the Old West
 - 22 Abnormal sac
 - 23 Yankee Doodle's trounl
 - 24 Zodiac ion
 - 25 Or :relusing to walk
 - 29 1 of 13 original notions
 - 34 Wooden box
 - 35 Purchase
 - 38 Achieved victory
 - 37 Level as a building
 - 38 Manufacturer
 - 39 Vol stack as a rope
 - 40 Puzbul
 - 41 Broad va eyes
 - 42 Pucely trel
 - 43 Goes on stage
 - 45 First grade textbook
 - 46 Tai to keep up
 - 47 Collin platform
 - 48 Resound
 - 51 Pugnacity
 - 56 Get bigger
 - 57 Moves toward
 - 58 Lunchme
 - 60 Citron's VP
 - 61 Use a pteridil supply
 - 62 Lady of the music world
 - 63 Surgery treatment
 - 64 one's cool slows up
 - 65 Period of time



Created by Jacqueline E Mathews 1/14/20

Monday's Puzzle Solved

HIT	IDAHO	SICK
PANE	MELON	HOLE
ONCE	PASSAGEWAY	
TKO	PILOT	LEAPS
HEIST	JET	
SHEATH	RINSES	
PERRY	ALIGN	NOT
AXES	PLODS	ETCH
TEN	BULGE	PARKA
STARRY	SOREST	
TIE	MANNA	
STOOD	BLIND	TOE
WONDERLAND	TIAS	
AGED	OUNCE	WETS
MASS	BREED	ASH

- DOWN**
- 1 Skedaddled
 - 2 In the center of
 - 3 No longer here
 - 4 Peacolu
 - 5 As as an ape
 - 6 Wonderfu
 - 7 The Piper of Hamelin
 - 8 Toddler transport
 - 9 Russia's capital
 - 10 Cosa counts in horseshoes
 - 11 TV series for Mark Hamon
 - 12 He'd on to
 - 14 Bne'rest
 - 21 Jaz
 - 25 Word attached to drum or wax
 - 26 Sma' teltow piece
 - 27 Exchange
 - 28 Gillette product
 - 29 E'ington & others
 - 30 Peepers
 - 31 Prize
 - 32 Waken
 - 33 Go into
 - 35 Soozing oniment
 - 38 Minor, borderline
 - 39 Riping
 - 41 number or treat pac'y
 - 42 off: rks
 - 44 Lry or Jac
 - 45 Ceases with water
 - 47 TV's Uncle M'be
 - 48 Bacon accompaniment
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Gardening trends for 2020? Think unconventional, sustainable

By DEAN FOSDICK

Associated Press

Gardeners in 2020 will veer from the beaten path, opting for unconventional varieties and eco-conscious surroundings, according to a plant trends study by horticulturalists with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS).

Their forecast is based largely on market observations and feedback from people seeking information from Extension offices.

Interest is strong for native plants, dwarf hybrids, "re-wilding" gardens, edible settings, wildlife-friendly landscapes, dark foliage, succulents, novel greens, landscaping for natural disasters, and softer, leafier floral arrangements, the horticulturalists said.

"More and more folks are wanting to think about sustainability," said Mark Tancig, a UF/IFAS agent based in Leon County.

"They're wanting to plant things that don't require as much water or fertilizer," he said. "Plants that resist disease and insects. Plants that provide for wildlife use and need less maintenance and input. That not only saves money but it looks good, too. It's restorative to the environment." Breaking down the study's trending Top 10:

--Native Plants. These plants original to a specific place generally are lower maintenance, requiring less water, pruning and fertilizer.

--Dwarf Hybrids. Gardeners without a lot of living space increasingly are choosing the dwarf varieties of their favorite plants. They also require less pruning.

--Re-Wilding Gardens. To encourage beneficial insects and the health of your garden, allow shrubs



This June 15, 2015 photo shows a dwarf hybrid blueberry plant growing in a container on a residential sidewalk near Langley, Wash.

Associated Press

to return to their natural shapes, let grass grow longer and permit a few weeds to flower, said Theresa Badurek, horticulture agent for Pinellas County. "Some of those volunteer weeds may be great wildflowers."

--Edible Settings. Fruit-bearing plants, ornamental vegetables and edible flowers do double duty, adding beauty as well as nutrition to the home landscape.

--Plants for Wildlife. "Most contemporary landscapes lack diversity, so gardeners should choose a variety of plants that flower and fruit," Badurek said. Plants with berries attract birds, and layering plants of varying heights provides hiding places for other species.

--Dark Foliage. Plants with red, purple or black leaves are striking additions to any landscape, making them attractive to gardeners looking for something new in 2020, said Marguerite Beckford, a horticulture

agent in Sarasota County.

--Succulents. People are reaching out for lesser-

known succulents that offer interesting shapes, textures and growth habits, the Uni-

versity of Florida horticulturalists say.

--Novel Greens. Vegetable gardeners will be looking to diversify their harvests with leafy greens generally grown outside the United States — bok choy, mizuna and komatsuna among them, according to the horticulturalists.

--Landscaping for Natural Disasters. "Storms are becoming more erratic and more feared," Tancig said. "Plant the kinds of trees around your home that reduce risk."

--Softer, Leafier Floral Arrangements. Flowers combined with foliage are gaining in popularity. "We are going away from the bundle bouquet of solitary flower blooms to the soft, organic feel of greenery," said Karen Stauderman, an Extension horticulture agent for Volusia County. □

China mourns native paddlefish scientists say is now extinct

By YANAN WANG

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The Chinese paddlefish's sharp, protruding snout made it one of the largest freshwater species in the world. Since scientists declared it extinct in a research paper published last week, Chinese internet users and media outlets have been paying tribute to the hefty creature.

"It's farewell at first sight," said China Youth Daily, noting that many were lamentably unfamiliar with the paddlefish before learning of its demise. Users shared similar sentiments on the Twitter-like Weibo platform.

So named for its distinctive shape, the Chinese paddlefish, or Chinese swordfish, had a lineage dating back at least 34 million years, scientists believe.

It could grow as long as 7 meters (23 feet), but in the end, it couldn't survive the overfishing, habitat fragmentation and loss of biodiversity in its native Yangtze River, according to a research paper in the Science of The Total Environment, a peer-reviewed environmental science journal.

"As no individuals exist in captivity, and no living tissues are conserved for potential resurrection, the fish should be considered extinct," the paper said, pointing to criteria for inclusion on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.

The paper was authored by scientists



In this Nov. 11, 2016, photo provided by the Museum of Hydrobiological Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, a Chinese paddlefish specimen made in 1990 is seen on display at the Museum of Hydrobiological Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Wuhan, China.

Associated Press

from the Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences, the University of Kent and the University of South Bohemia in the Czech Republic.

The paper said since the late 1970s Chinese paddlefish populations declined drastically.

The decline corresponded with major dam construction in the Yangtze.

During that time, the Gezhouba Dam was built on the main stream of the river, and the opening of the Three Gorges dam project followed in 2003 — the last year a live Chinese paddlefish was sighted.

A survey in 2017 and 2018 found 332 fish species in the Yangtze, but not a single specimen of Chinese paddlefish. □

'Holy Grail' digital effects rewinding the clock for actors

By MATT KEMP

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — With Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman" expected to battle "Once Upon a Time in... Hollywood" and "1917" for the best picture Oscar in February, all eyes are on the special effects team that made the sprawling crime epic possible.

"The Irishman" unfolds over decades, with the 76-year-old Robert De Niro and his co-stars playing their characters from their 30s into retirement age, a feat that's made the film one of 2019's most acclaimed movies.

It's all possible through new digital de-aging techniques that in the past year in cinemas have shaved decades from Samuel L. Jackson's face and turned back the clock to the 1990s for Will Smith. When Monday's Academy Award nominations are announced, "Captain Marvel" and "Gemini Man" could see their names called along with "The Irishman" in the visual effects category. Each film has arrived at its reverse aging trick through a different technique, leading some to call 2019 a monumental year for de-aging in film.

To many, "The Irishman" stands out from the field, thanks to its complete avoidance of "tracking markers" — dots painted onto actors faces which allow computers to mathematically replicate facial movements and manipulate them as the director sees fit.

The youthful transitions of "The Irishman" are the work of Pablo Helman, visual effects supervisor at Industrial Light and Magic, who's an Oscar nominee for his work on "Star Wars: Episode II — Attack of the Clones" and "War of the Worlds."

Helman says the decision to forgo tracking markers came directly from Scorsese and De Niro.

"He's not going to wear a helmet with little cameras in there," says Helman. "He's going to want to be in the moment with Joe Pesci and Al Pacino on set, with no markers on him. So, if



This combination of photos shows actor Robert De Niro, left, during the filming of "The Irishman" and the younger version of De Niro created by Pablo Helman, visual effects supervisor at Industrial Light and Magic.

Associated Press

you're going to capture the performance, how are you going to do that?"

Enter the "three-headed monster," a unique camera rig that has a director camera in the center and two "witness" cameras on either side shooting infrared footage. That allowed Helman to eliminate shadows created by on-set lighting. The shadows could potentially interfere with the geometric facial shapes constructed by de-aging software.

"You're not interrupting the director's thread of thinking," explains Helman. "You're not changing the light on set, but the computer can see in a different spectrum."

While the team at Industrial Light and Magic was working on "The Irishman," another group of technical wizards were experimenting with de-aging at Weta Digital (part of director Peter Jackson's Weta Workshop in New Zealand), creating an entirely digital, 23-year-old version of Smith for the action movie "Gemini Man." "Since I started visual FX 25 years ago it's been the Holy Grail," says Bill Westenhofer, one of the film's VFX supervisors.

"You have that many years of expertise of looking at a human face and knowing what's wrong. So, to try and



This combination of photos shows actor Joe Pesci, left, during the filming of "The Irishman" and the younger version of Pesci created by Pablo Helman, visual effects supervisor at Industrial Light and Magic.

Associated Press

get all the different things together and get it to pull off right, that's been the challenge."

To create the character of Junior — a younger clone of Smith's assassin Henry Brogan — the superstar wore the traditional gray tracksuit, complimented by a head rig with two cameras capturing his facial expressions via tracking markers. "We decided (on) a ground up approach to build everything from scratch — from the skull all the way to the skin pores, all the way to the animation and the final kind of oil in the eyes was really the best approach we could take," says Stu Adcock, head of

facial motion at Weta.

Before filming commenced on both "Gemini Man" and "The Irishman," the teams at ILM and Weta drew up test footage to show the films' directors that what they were suggesting was possible. For "The Irishman," De Niro also returned to the 1990s, performing the Pink Cadillac scene from "Goodfellas" before being de-aged in post-production — convincing an initially skeptical Scorsese that he could bring the long-gestating project to life. Helman and his team then spent two years looking through old movies and cataloging the targeted ages that De Niro, Pacino

and Pesci would appear in "The Irishman." They created a program — similar to that used to create online "deepfake" videos where one actor's face is swapped for another's — which would check their work on the movie was heading in the right direction, with the system "spewing out" hundreds of images for cross-referencing.

Creating Junior required Smith to spend time in a photogrammetry booth where multiple cameras captured his likeness as numerous lights fired in different sequences, giving a base scan of the actor and analyzing the structure of his face from a skin pore level.

Ironically, considering Scorsese's vocal criticism of Marvel movies as "not cinema," a similar system was used to de-age Jackson in "Captain Marvel." A young Nick Fury was created by comparing footage from old Jackson movies with the work the actor did on set — again, using tracking markers.

"I looked at that face as, you know, maybe 'The Negotiator' face," says Jackson, referring to his 1998 movie of the same name, "Fortunately for them and for me, I had enough stuff from that period in my life that they could use a bunch of different facial expressions and films to put that face together that made sense to people who knew me from that time."

Darren Hendler, director of the Digital Human Group at Digital Domain and the man responsible for turning Josh Brolin into "Avengers" supervillain Thanos, was impressed by Jackson's appearance in the movie.

"That's more of a 2D-image based approach where they're taking the actor's performance and then they're painting and tracking certain frames. They're still using some of the actor's performance directly, but they're modifying it. It was very believable. It may not have been exactly what the young Samuel Jackson looked like, but it definitely looked de-aged." □



In this Sept. 6, 2016 file photo, Brazil's impeached President Dilma Rousseff receives flowers and gifts from supporters as she leaves the presidential residence, Alvorada Palace, in Brasilia, Brazil. Associated Press

Brazil documentary gets Oscar nomination, exposes division

By MAURICIO SAVARESE
Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — The Academy Award nomination for a Brazilian documentary about the impeachment of then-President Dilma Rousseff has laid bare the polarization of Latin America's largest democracy.

In "The Edge of Democracy," 36-year-old filmmaker Petra Costa uses her personal story to argue that Brazil's democracy is at risk after the abrupt end to governments led by the leftist Workers' Party between 2003 and 2016.

Leftists argue the accusation of fiscal manipulation of the budget against Rousseff is not a crime and not an impeachable offense. Right-wingers insist that is the case, and some of them argue there were enough problems in Rousseff's administration to do away with it anyway.

With Rousseff's removal in 2016, her conservative vice president, Michel Temer, assumed power and

in 2018, far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro defeated the Workers' Party candidate to win the presidency. Leftist politicians said the nomination validates their interpretation of Rousseff's impeachment as a soft coup, as Costa suggests. Brazil's congress had also impeached President Fernando Collor de Mello in 1992 due to corruption charges, but that process was much less divisive.

"The story of the 2016 coup that removed me from the presidency through a fraudulent impeachment has taken the world," Rousseff said in a statement.

"The movie shows how my removal from power - and the venal media and Brazilian political and economic elites charged against democracy in this country - resulted in the rise of a far-right candidate in 2018."

Rousseff's mentor, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who recently was released from jail pending appeal of his corruption conviction, praised Costa

on Twitter for "the seriousness in which she narrated this important time of our history."

"Truth will prevail," he wrote. Conservatives fired back, slamming the film's veracity and insisting Brazil's first female president deserved to be ousted for manipulating budget figures. During her impeachment trials, Rousseff's popularity rating was in the single digits and her administration was largely blamed for the country's economic crisis after a decade of gains.

"Congratulations to filmmaker Petra Costa on her nomination for best fiction and fantasy," the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, which was instrumental in Rousseff's impeachment process, said on Twitter.

Roberto Alvim, Bolsonaro's secretary of culture, also said Costa's documentary amounts to fiction and told local newspaper Folha de S.Paulo that its recognition by Hollywood proves the culture wars are being waged internationally. □

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 PH MON-THU 6:05 | 8:20
 FRI 6:05 | 8:20 | 10:35
 SAT 3:50 | 6:05 | 8:20 | 10:35
 SUN 3:50 | 6:05 | 8:20 | 10:35
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 FRI 6:05 | 8:10 | 10:15
 SAT 1:55 | 4:00 | 6:05 | 8:10 | 10:15
 SUN 1:55 | 4:00 | 6:05 | 8:10
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THE GRUDGE
 TARA WESTWOOD | JUNKO BAILEY
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 SAT-SUN 1:20 | 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20
 PBP MON-THU 5:40 | 8:20
 FRI 5:40 | 8:20 | 11:00
 SAT 3:00 | 5:40 | 8:20 | 11:00
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 PBP MON-FRI 4:20 | 6:40 | 9:00
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Arizona store gives 'Star Wars' record back to Mark Hamill

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — The Force was strong enough at an Arizona store to reunite Luke Skywalker with his long-lost vinyl record.

Actor Mark Hamill is praising workers at Bookmans Entertainment Exchange in Flagstaff for returning the "Star Wars: A New Hope" soundtrack that had been a gift from film composer John Williams.

Hamill said in a tweet Saturday that it felt "totally unexpected & positively surreal" to get back the record he hadn't seen since the early 1990s. He commended the store about 145 miles (233 kilometers) north of Phoenix for being honest and not selling it.

"I happily offered to sign any ("Star Wars") items they sent me," the actor wrote. Williams had written on the vinyl's sleeve: "Dear Mark Hamill, May the force always be with us."



In this Dec. 16, 2019, file photo, Mark Hamill arrives at the world premiere of "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" in Los Angeles. Associated Press

The record was one of numerous "Star Wars" items brought in by a woman after her father's death in 2018, the Arizona Daily Sun reported. Employees at the Arizona-based chain that sells used books, movies and CDs tried to verify the signature.

Micheil Salmons, the store's general manager, said they

eventually tried reaching out to Hamill via social media. The actor confirmed it was genuine, and the vinyl was sent back to him.

Salmons said Hamill signed a DVD of "Star Wars: A New Hope" and two medals that are replicas of those given to his character and Han Solo, played by Harrison Ford, in the film. □

Queen's summit: Key questions on Prince Harry's future

By GREGORY KATZ

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The crisis gripping Britain's royal family over Prince Harry's plan to step down from royal duties moved to Queen Elizabeth II's rural retreat in eastern England Monday afternoon. The 93-year-old monarch summoned Prince Charles, heir to the throne, and his sons, princes William and Harry, to Sandringham House to thrash out difficult issues. The queen said after the meeting that the family respects the couple's decision, but many important matters haven't been resolved.

Here are some key questions regarding the couple's future:

WHY HAVE THEIR PLANS CAUSED A CRISIS?

Prince Harry and Meghan, formally known as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, are charismatic senior royals known throughout the world. Many saw them as playing a vital role in building the monarchy's popularity with future generations. But they both seem disillusioned and unhappy and have now said they want to step back from royal duties, become financially independent, and spend much of their time in North America. This has caused a fissure at the highest ranks of the world's best known royal family.

CAN THEY BREAK AWAY FROM TAXPAYER SUPPORT?

Harry and Meghan have said on their website that they will no longer use a fund called the Sovereign Grant to pay for a small part of their office costs. The grant is provided by Britain's Treasury to fund



In this Tuesday, June 26, 2018 file photo, Britain's Queen Elizabeth, Prince Harry and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex pose for a group photo at the Queen's Young Leaders Awards Ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London.

the monarchy — last year it totalled more than 80 million pounds (\$104 million). The couple said they would still use public money to pay for official overseas trips carried out at the request of the government and continue to use the recently renovated Frogmore Cottage as their U.K. base — if the queen agrees to allow them to use what is part of the Crown Estate. The queen said in a statement Monday that Harry and Meghan “have made clear that they do not want to be reliant on public funds in their new lives,” but said many details remain to be worked out.

WILL PRINCE CHARLES KEEP HELPING OUT?

Each year, Charles receives a substantial amount of revenue from the Duchy of Cornwall estate that was

established in 1337. He's not allowed to sell any of its considerable assets, but he receives income from it each year and uses it to fund many of his activities, along with those of his wife Camilla, William and his wife Kate, and Harry and Meghan. Last year the income amounted to more than 20 million pounds. It is not at all clear that Charles would want to provide extensive support for Harry, 35, and Meghan, 38, if they are no longer carrying out royal duties. The queen's statement didn't address this difficult matter.

CAN MEGHAN PROFIT FROM HER CELEBRITY STATUS?

There is very little doubt that Meghan would be a very attractive brand ambassador for some of the top fashion and fragrance houses, and potentially be

on a par with the likes of Julia Roberts, Nicole Kidman and Keira Knightley. But any overtly financial arrangement like this could easily clash with any royal duties Meghan and Harry have said they plan to continue on a part-time basis. It could also appear unseemly for a royal to cash in like this. It's not clear if the queen and the rest of the family would be comfortable with this approach to financial independence.

WHO WILL PAY FOR THEIR SECURITY?

Armed security for senior royals is provided by a special unit of the Metropolitan Police and other agencies. This is paid for by taxpayers, but officials do not provide a breakdown of costs, preferring to keep the operational details confidential. The expense would cer-

tainly rise if it involves deploying a protection team to Canada or the U.S. for months at a time. Harry and Meghan point out on their website that this protection is “mandated” by Britain's Home Office. It is not clear if the couple has the option of dropping its official protection and personally paying for any security they feel is warranted for themselves and their infant son Archie.

WILL THEY STILL BE ROYAL?

Another question relates to whether they will retain their titles as His Royal Highness and Her Royal Highness. These are very high status titles, but the status they convey also greatly increases press scrutiny, which Harry and Meghan say they want to avoid because of its intrusive nature. It's possible they could give up the titles voluntarily. It's also possible the queen and others might feel they should give up their most prestigious titles if they are withdrawing from royal obligations. The queen's brief statement didn't address the question of titles, but made clear they would still remain “a valued part of my family.”

WHAT ABOUT THEIR TAX SITUATION?

Harry and Meghan each have substantial assets of their own and any move to Canada could have a substantial impact on their tax liability.

They could both be required to pay Canadian taxes if they spend substantial amounts of time in that country. Canada is a Commonwealth country where the queen is head of state. □

Ronan Farrow among nominees for book critic prizes

NEW YORK (AP) — Ronan Farrow has already won a Pulitzer Prize and George Polk Award for his reporting on Harvey Weinstein and the #MeToo movement. Now he's up for a literary honor, a National Book Critics Circle award.

Farrow was among the nominees announced this weekend by the NBCC.

His “Catch and Kill: Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect Predators,” which tracks his reporting on allegations of sexual harassment and assault against Weinstein, is a finalist in autobiography.

Critics also nominated Chanel Miller's “Know My Name,” the acclaimed memoir by the woman sex-

ually assaulted by Stanford University student Brock Turner.

The NBCC announced five nominees in each of six competitive categories, from fiction to poetry to criticism.

Winners will be announced March 12.

Sarah Broom's memoir “The Yellow House,” winner

of a National Book Award for nonfiction last fall, received the John Leonard Prize for best first book.

The New Yorker's Katy Waldman was awarded the Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing and the poet-novelist Naomi Shihab Nye was given the Ivan Sandrof Lifetime Achievement Award. □



This Oct. 15, 2018 file photo shows Journalist Ronan Farrow at the 25th Annual ELLE Women in Hollywood Celebration in Los Angeles. Associated Press

Oklahoma program offers rescue for horses, other equine

By SEAN MURPHY
Associated Press

EDMOND, Okla. (AP) — When Ken Friend learned a job transfer meant moving his family to California from the small farm they'd been living on in rural Oklahoma, he knew he'd have to find new homes for his animals. In addition to the four dogs Friend had adopted over the 14 years he and his wife lived in Tecumseh, they also had four horses who enjoyed free rein on 80 acres (32 hectares) of Oklahoma pasture. Friend managed to find homes for two of his dogs and gave away one of his riding horses, but he struggled to find a home for his longtime pal, a 28-year-old appendix quarter horse named Indigo. "That horse was my buddy," Friend said. "I rode him for years, and I just couldn't see giving him to anybody."

After months of searching with no luck, Friend turned to a new equine rescue facility operated by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The nonprofit agency says the pilot program is the first of its kind in the U.S. that will accept any horse, no matter its condition. Experts say the problem facing equine owners like Friend is a growing one across the country, sometimes leading to horses starving to death. Just in



In this Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019 photo, Katrina Friend works with a horse at Nexus Equine in Edmond, Okla.

Associated Press

recent months, prosecutors filed criminal charges in cases involving cruelty to horses in Colorado, Illinois and Vermont. In one case in Pennsylvania, starving horses with no food were found eating tree roots and fence posts. Several years ago Oklahoma ended a 50-year ban on the slaughter of horses, with advocates for the change citing the growing situation of horses being abandoned in their old age. The problem can become more acute in states with volatile economies, like Alaska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Wy-



In this Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019 photo, Tom Persechino, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' director of equine welfare, walks in a paddock with some newly acquired miniature horses at Nexus Equine, in Edmond, Okla.

Associated Press



In this Thursday, Dec. 12, 2019 photo, Tom Persechino, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' director of equine welfare, walks in a paddock with some newly acquired miniature horses at Nexus Equine, in Edmond, Okla.

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of horses that are at risk."

A collaborative study conducted last year showed nearly 5,000 horses were received at various rescue facilities during a six-month period in 2018, with nearly 90% of those horses ending up adopted. The study showed many of the horses were seized by law enforcement. Located on gently rolling hills on the outskirts of the Oklahoma City suburb of Edmond, the pilot facility in Oklahoma already has taken in more than 50 animals, mostly horses, but also some donkeys, said Thomas Persechino, ASPCA's director of equine welfare.

"In a good number of situations, people hold on to their horses longer than they anticipated because they don't have the option of taking it somewhere," he said. "For some people, that horse may end up in an at-risk situation and go someplace where the owner never intended it to go."

Among the animals available to be adopted are two donkeys, Albert and Yankee, miniatures like Tomahawk and Jack Frost, and about a dozen horses. A similar pilot program in Dallas last year helped nearly 60 equines in less than six months, Persechino said. About 30% of those were relinquished due to health reasons and had to be euthanized upon arrival, but nearly all the rest were successfully adopted into new homes.

The main reasons people bring horses to the facility, Persechino said, are that owners are physically unable to provide them with proper care, the horses are too sick or the owners are moving. Friend's horse, Indigo, one of the first to be taken into the facility, has been placed with an Edmond family and renamed Amos. "They send me pictures. He's put on a little bit of weight, he's looking happy and things are going great," Friend said from his new home in California. "They stay in touch with me, which I appreciate, so I know he's well taken care of." □

oming or Oklahoma, which rely heavily on the energy industry. Some horse owners might lose a job or family income, or even grow too old to properly care for a horse, said Dr. Dan Burba, head of the Oklahoma State University's Veterinary Clinical Sciences Department. "There are owners with neither the room, time or resources to keep these animals through their longevity," Burba said. "Horses now, with the care they're receiving, they're living longer, there's more of them out there, and it sometimes gets to a point where owners say, 'This horse is too old for me to keep,' or 'It's taking a lot more care from me than I can afford.' "These are the populations